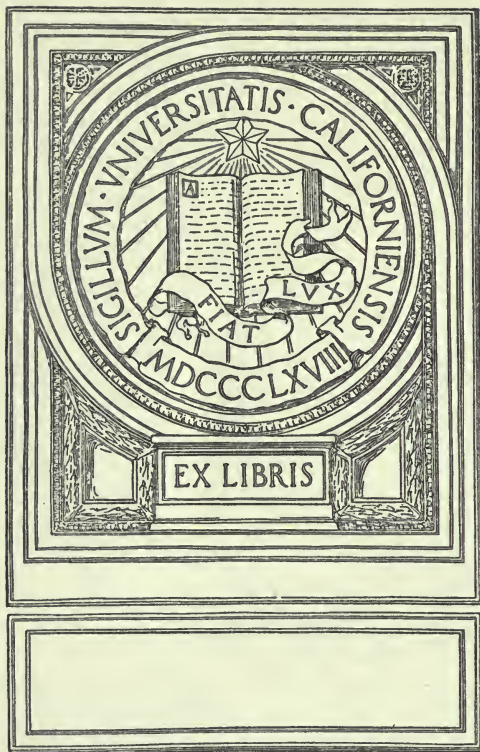




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THE
CRESTED SEAS



"When we got alongside we had to be everlastin'ly careful."

THE CRESTED SEAS

BY
JAMES BRENDAN CONNOLLY

AUTHOR OF "OUT OF GLOUCESTER," "THE SEINERS,"
"THE DEEP SEA'S TOLL," ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS
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THE DANCE

The Dance

INTO the middle of the dance somebody threw what was meant for a bombshell. "They say the cutter's on the way," suddenly said this lad.

"Some say she's in the bay," he added, when his preliminary seemed to produce no consternation. But the man at whom it was aimed was not unacquainted with the abounding jealousy of the male in this most primitive region of West Newfoundland; and also it had ever been his secret pride that nothing affected his nerve.

"Even if she is," he retorted now, "what odds till she gets here?" and in doubling enjoyment continued to swing his buxom partner.

But at midnight a young fellow in fishing rig came from the other side of the bay with news yet more positive and alarming. "Where's Captain Powers?"

"In a minute, boy, and I'll be with you," and to the assembled admiration finished the reel.

"She's to anchor below, and they've been inquiring of you, Captain—you and the little *Weasel*."

"Then it's time for me to go. But what d'y' say, Bess, another dance?"



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"Surely, Bryan, one more," and in exulting triumph with this capture of the American captain she snapped her fingers to the fiddler, after which she accompanied him to the porch.

"And when will you be back, Bryan? For, of course, 'twill be a small matter for you to slip the cutter and away as you've done a score o' times before. When will you be back?"

"I'll be back for a dance this night week. And mind you keep one for me, Bess."

"Ay, boy, and more than one," and they kissed and parted.

In his little schooner Bryan, to escape the cutter, was forced to crowd into the Gulf of St. Lawrence by the north shore of the bay. Once there he would have liked to lay his course for the Magdalen Islands, which lay two hundred miles or so to the west and south; but now, what with the approaching morn and the attendant light, he dared not cross the open water at the mouth of the bay. The cutter's glasses were altogether too far-reaching, even if they were not informed by jealous swains as to the likeliest direction to find him. So he decided to head northward, to hug the coast until such time as it might be safe to swing out into the broad gulf and so on southerly to the Magdalens. This he the more readily decided to do because on the north coast were loopholes of

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escape—little harbors of refuge wherein a bold man might slip to and hide from troublesome cutters that could steam against the wind.

“And speaking of Bonne Bay, Wallace”—Bryan was addressing the cleverest of his crew—“a good hundred miles it is, but suppose now we could make it?”

“You make it and I’ll find a hiding place where a whole navy of bloodhounds wouldn’t smell us, Captain.”

“Well, Bonne Bay it is.”

“And here’s the vapor coming, Captain—to hide us from the cutter.”

“M-m—yes, Wallace—but hides her from us, too.”

They were debating that question then when, the white haze lifting and rolling away, they made out the smudge of smoke astern. Far away it was then, but not to be doubted.

“The cutter, Captain?”

“That’s what. And if we can see her smoke she can surely make out our sail. Here’s where the vapor would help, Wallace, and bear out your argument.”

“Ay, Captain. ’Twas like a wall, that vapor.”

“Like a wall, yes, Wallace, or like a curtain hiding the stage. But now”—he drove his arm through the air as if it were a solid substance op-

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posing him—"now the wind's our only hope. Blow, ye devils, blow!" and, after his fashion, allowed his mind to run where it would.

"Man, but the breeze I had once in the Bering Sea, and a cruiser ten times the size of that cutter after us! Out of the fog she came like a black something throwing off a white sheet. All black she was except for a gold stripe along her run, and ten thousand horse-power. We knew her and she knew us; and we a little vessel with only the wind to save her—and us. But that's not getting away from this fellow, is it? Sway up everything now."

And, while they heaved on the halyards and gigs, he sang defiantly:

" "Oh, beating up the coast on a blowy winter's day—
From the fog we raised a cutter of his Kinglet's o'er
the way.
She fires a shot across our bows by way of saying,
Belay!
We ranges fair across her bows, and then—we bore
away.
Southeast by east for Matakan, and, oh, the wind it
blew!
As out before the howling gale our little vessel flew.
The sea was such, the wind was such, they did'nt fire
a shot,
Because they didn't dare to wear, but—they must 've
swore a lot!
" "O, flyin' down the coast like——'
another heave or two on the mains'l, fellows."

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He trained the glasses on the fast-looming steamer astern. "I told 'em I'd wreck the jack before I'd let any Gover'ment vessel get her, and I will. Damn 'em, anyway, all cutters and cruisers! And if she is wrecked——"

"Wrecked? Then it'll be mixed drinks, Skipper."

Bryan grinned. "It cert'nly will. And high-priced—there's stuff below cost ten dollars a quart."

"H-m-m——" Wallace was drawing the end of his tongue across his lower lip. "I've been thinking, Skipper, that we'd all be better men if we had a sup of that same. A shame, don't you think yourself, Skipper—so much of it below, and we like to lose it all soon and never a sup on so cold a mornin'?"

"Well, I don't know but you're right, Wallace. Off with the hatch, and the first case you find bring on deck—the first case, mind."

They tossed one up. "Let's see now. What'd you get? You cert'nly drew a good one. That's the most expensive stuff in her hold."

"Ay, Skipper, we know'd it, when we stowed it." Wallace grinned widely. "Is it every man a bottle to himself, Skipper?"

"One bottle, no more; but no stopping to drink it all now. One swallow now and then; stand by, for I see that Bonne Bay we'll never make,

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though this breeze is all that a big ship could ask for. Fifty tons more to her now and she'd be doin' her fourteen in this breeze."

"And yet a grand boat of her tonnage, Skipper—quick to handle."

"I know that, and a good thing for where I think I'll put her—Hell's Harbor do they still call it, just ahead? That was the name when I was last there, five years ago."

"Ay, sir, and hell it is yet to make on a blowy day."

"All the worse for whoever is behind us. And worse yet if men brought up on sailing craft don't dare to go farther than steamboat hands. You'll follow me, lads?"

"Ay, Skipper!" They waved the half-empty bottles. "To hell itself!"

Bryan could easily make out the cutter then. "Four miles to our three she's coming. O man, but with fifty tons more there'd be damn little turning out of the road then, and that lad so bold with his guns would never get near enough to use them. But, Lord, it's a poor man that quarrels with his tools. She'll do. We'll make her do. Stand ready now. Heave those bottles over or hurry up and empty them—one or the other."

"Will you be needing a pilot, Skipper?" asked Wallace. "'Cause if you do——"

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"Why a pilot? Even if I couldn't remember, it's easy made, that road. There's the deep water, and there's the rocks, both marked better than if all the red and black Gover'ment buoys in the world was there. Where a surf like that shows only blind men could go wrong. And they wouldn't even then, if they only used their ears. Pilot? Lord, no, but a strong hand to the wheel. Take it, you Wallace, and forget all that ever entered your head except how to steer a vessel. And wait till I give the word. And when I do, you move. Hear me? If you hope to see Bay of Islands ever again, you work now."

So they ran till it lacked an hour of sunset. "Plenty of light yet, plenty," muttered Bryan, and guided her between two large rocks, Hell's Gateposts, against which the billows of the broad gulf were now breaking, mounting white to the bald crests almost.

Tearing past the granite entrance went the little jack, with Wallace to the wheel and eyes on Bryan, who in turn stood at the fore-rigging with eyes only for the channel ahead. It was a dubious outlook; so much so that were it not for the narrow strip of green between quarter and bare rocks Bryan would have taken but small comfort. "But that lad behind won't come in so easy, steam power though he has," he commented, and

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by way of defiance waved an arm toward them. "And once within, I'm blessed sure he'll feel even less comfortable, especially when he comes to turn the Elbow—if ever he does."

Inside the entrance they drove through a little harbor of quiet water, where the jack might have lain comfortably if it were not for the pursuing cutter.

The only passage for them out of Hell's Harbor was through the north entrance, and to reach that from the south side of the bay it was necessary to go by way of the Elbow. The bay was sometimes used by fishermen to set trawls or nets; but expert and venturesome as they were, when they desired to reach one side of the bay from the other, the north from the south or *vice versa*, they usually preferred to make the passage outside rather than attempt the Elbow, even in moderate weather. And now it was blowing a gale.

Now fairly inside, the jack was approaching a stretch of jagged rocks which protruded from the sea for varying heights. Some barely showed above the normal level, others rose for perhaps ten feet above the surface of the sea. Devil's Claws the natives called them, and never did they suggest a more wicked end to whoever might approach them than now in this westerly gale which, pressing in from the Gulf, whistled as it forced its

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way through the narrow entrance, and further in, where now the jack was, tore up the sea until the claws lay, now bare and again all but hidden by the upborne waters.

The peril of the moment could not dull Bryan's easily stirred imagination. "The breeze is making this devil nervous," he said. "See him open and close his fingers. Maybe he thinks there'll be something doing for him soon"—and just then a fresh squall tearing the water wide open—"and now see him! It's teeth, not claws, now—look! He opens his mouth and laughs, and you can see his gums and then the teeth close again and—m'm—they'd grab us in a minute and chew us up and spit us out. He wouldn't stop to swallow us, not him—but spit us out, dead men all, crushed and bloody—and our little vessel ground to powder. Oh, don't you wish you could get us!" He shook his fist at the indented row.

The crew were inhaling the leader's spirit: "Would he stop to take a few sups of wine on the way, Captain?"

Bryan laughed. "Lord, but you're certainly wits. But it's blood, not wine, he wants. But look astern!"

They looked and saw the cutter now inside the entrance, feeling her way cautiously. "She'll never come this far. The look of that little line

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of rocks there and the narrowing of the passage will be enough for her. She won't come far enough to examine any Elbow. Soon it'll be about ship and most careful in the turning, with the engine-room bells working double watches. Back to the south for her when she finds she can't get here. Plenty of good men in those Gover'nment boats, but they're gen'rally not running long chances, certainly not just for devilment. However things turn out, their pay envelopes come at the end of every month regular."

"Ay, they gets their wages, Captain, but we has to earn ours first."

"That's it. And right here's where we'll earn—or lose—ours. Steady now." The jack was nearing the point where she would have to make what was practically a right-angled turn, after which she would have to speed into the wind like a top. And everything would need to be done with extreme rapidity. Then, when she was all but ready to come about, she would have to be given her head; and then away with her on the new course, which was practically at right angles to the entering stretch.

With the wind as it was then, and with the cutter making a need of hurrying, Bryan knew that he would find it necessary to keep her under full headway, and only to hold her up, to check her,

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at the critical point; and then it would have to be as one checks a race-horse. For, if she ran by but a length or slid off as sheets were hauled in, it was up on the rocks with her and the end for themselves.

One of the crew, after studying Bryan's face, was moved to ask: "Will she make it, d'y' think, Captain?"

He saw what they needed. "And why shouldn't we make it? A quick-handlin' little vessel and still light enough to see, why not?" And almost gaily drove her up, with the freshly encouraged crew to the sheets. Without a sign of slack he let her tear on, until the men turned half-round to look at him. "Trust me," he called, and they, high-strung but trusting, stood ready.

Not until the spray from the surge of the dreaded lee line of rocks was coming over her bow and the crew thought she surely was about to strike, did he give the word. Bryan himself had the wheel then. "In sheets!" he called.

They hauled like demons. "Enough?" and they snapped the half hitches on.

"Now pay out!" and "Stand by again!" he called, and again like racing men awaiting the starter's pistol they crouched to the sheets. "Now!" snapped Bryan, and in they sheeted again like demons.

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"When I say 'Hold!' see that you hold," warned Bryan.

"Ay, sir."

"Now—hold!" and hold they did hard and fast, and down the forearm of the Elbow tore the little jack. Another minute of fair running and she was safe.

"We played in luck," commented Bryan, and, gazing back curiously at the bent line in his wake and the rocks whereon the ceaseless white seas had never allowed the moss to fasten, his imagination was off again. "Like white horses, mad white horses running wild. Lord help what they stamp under their feet! But where's our cutter? Get me the glasses and we'll have a look. H'm—there she is, going to anchor. Or is she waiting for us, hoping to head us off in the morning, no doubt? Afraid, by the Lord! to go back by the way she came till it's broad daylight. Yes, sir, that's what—she goes no farther on this hunt to-night. But that don't mean we don't go farther. Out of the northern gate can you take her, Wallace, in the night?"

"That I can, Captain."

"Then take her, boy. And to you (he waved a triumphant arm at the lights and the dim hull behind) good-by! And now, fellows, out into the Gulf and across to the Magdalens we'll go while

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that lad's thinking we're still hid away in here." And with the extreme of gaiety he sang again:

" Oh, flying down the coast like a penitential ghost,
And the howlin' west-nor'-wester warn't a-worryin'
us the most—
Oh, meet me up at Matakan, we'll have a party
there,
O Bess o' Bay of Islands and the red rose in her
hair !"

At an hour that should have brought them clear daylight the *Weasel* lay clear of the northern entrance of Hell's Harbor; but the vapor of a frosty winter's morning lay like a black cloud on the barely undulating sea. She should have been far off-shore then, well on her way to the Magdalens, but the wind was even flatter than the sea. She was merely bobbing up and down, and making no more progress than a grandmother's rocking-chair across a kitchen floor.

Bryan, no longer gay, was pacing her quarter; the men, gloomy, were walking her waist, and being less philosophical than their leader, swore in their beards. Except for their audible exclamations and their footfalls on the damp deck, not a sound echoed over the waters.

Abruptly Bryan halted in his walk, and first cocking an ear to the wind, bent it to the rail. A long harkening to the south, and he shook his head;

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and yet—it came after a thoughtful pause: “Mind, whatever happens, you fellows are all right. I signed you for a fishing trip, as the papers will show. No fault of yours I had contraband stuff in the hold.”

At that they began to feel even more uneasy; but that they were not actually prehensive was made clear when from out of the fog came the stroke of a bell. Ding-ding, ding-ding, ding-ding—six bells, seven o'clock. On the west coast of Newfoundland it was only Government vessels that marked the time with bells.

And then, exactly as it had done the previous day, the vapor quickly rolled up to the sky. Not a cable's length away lay the cutter. One pause for her commander to grasp the situation and they saw him pull the engine-room bell. She dropped easily alongside with her commander leaning over the rail of the bridge.

“Come aboard,” he said. The forbearance of the victor spoke in his tone.

“Thanks,” answered Powers, “I don't know but what we will. Come on, fellows.”

Not until he reached the deck of the cutter did he speak further. He had been looking over the rail at his little captive vessel, and from that turned and looked to where the rocks of the Bay of Islands lay. And then—it was with a sigh he said it:

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“Bessie, girl, I did my best, but we lingered o’er long at that dance, and now I’m afraid you’ll be having to get another partner.”

No more than that when it was time for him to be taken below.

ON THE BOTTOM OF
THE DORY

On the Bottom of the Dory

THERE was constraint between the men, else it would never have happened. Martin, hauling the heavily loaded trawl over the girde in the bow, could hardly have been expected to avert it, but ready to Harry's hand was the oar in the becket, placed there exactly for such a possibility. A quick flirt of a strong wrist and, bow-on or stern-to, she could have safely ridden out that sea. But Harry was not able, or not prepared, for it. Even after Martin had called, "Watch out for the next one!" he was slow to move. Something must have been on his mind.

So, exultingly, the oncoming sea picked her up and tossed her, and far out were cast the men. "Keep clear of the trawl!" warned Martin when he knew she was going, and instinctively pulled loose the thwart as she went.

When Martin came to the surface the dory lay bottom-up, perhaps thirty feet away, and between him and the dory was Harry struggling heavily. "Take the thwart," said Martin, and tossed it to him. "And here," picking up the empty trawl tub from beside him in the sea and casting that also

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to Harry, although with each effort he pushed himself under water and came up gasping; and yet a light matter that to him who was a swimmer beyond the average, and who now, weighted down though he was with heavy winter clothing, jack-boots, oilskins, had but little fear of reaching the dory.

Between tub and thwart the weaker man rested himself until Martin made the dory, when, taking a turn around one elbow of the painter which Martin cast him, he allowed himself to be drawn carefully alongside, and being by then pretty well exhausted he accepted Martin's further help to climb up on the bottom of the dory.

"And now take the plug strap," said Martin; and in his voice was just a note of contempt.

And there they clung on, Harry hanging safely to the plug strap, while Martin balanced himself with widespread arms and legs straddling the narrow bottom of the dory's bow. Two hours they clung so, and still the fog held; and then the snow began to fall. Only once did it break, and then only as if to make a lane through which they might see the sun sinking in the west. And with that sun went down much of their hope, though Martin would never have confessed it aloud.

"One good thing, we're sure of the points of the compass anyway, now. 'Tis a northeaster, and 'twill hang on till morning, surely."

On the Bottom of the Dory

"I'll never live till morning," said Harry, "even if I could hang on that long."

The consuming pity that glowed in Martin for all weak creatures dulled for a moment to the old ashes of contempt, though his "No, I don't think you could," was more by way of prodding the creature to at least a show of courage.

Bo-o-o-m!

"There goes the skipper with that old-fashioned fog-gun of his." Martin raised himself on an elbow as if to catch an echo. "She'll still be at anchor, and in the same spot. That's good."

"The vessel!" exclaimed Harry, and began to call wildly: "Hi-i—the *Ariadne*!"

"You might save your breath," suggested Martin, and again his scorn betrayed itself; "for she must be a mile to wind'ard of us."

It was not yet too dark for Martin to observe the expression of despair overcasting Harry's face. And dwelling on it all, the man's weakness, more of temperament than of intention, disdain again crumbled before pity. "Cheer up, boy, cheer up. 'Tis a deep sounding yet to bottom."

"Why, have you any notion we c'n save ourselves?"

"Oh, I don't know—a way will turn up, maybe."

"No, no, how can we? What's there for us to do if she can't hear us? She surely won't break

On the Bottom of the Dory

out her anchor and begin to cruise 'round looking for us for a long while yet; not till morning anyway, for the very fear that we, too, might be looking for the vessel. And they couldn't have seen us when we capsized, could they?

Dryly Martin spat out on the sea. "If we couldn't see them in the fog, a big vessel and high rigging, 't isn't likely they could see us, a little dory flat out on the water."

"I thought not." Despair again spoke in the falling tone.

"Man, man, spare your lips if they won't shape o' themselves to a little word of courage. I didn't say there warn't any hope."

Bo-o-o-m! came over the darkening waters.

"Like a word from home, that old fog-gun, isn't it?" Martin had made his way along the dory's bottom until now he lay beside his mate. Possibly for five minutes he lay so, gazing out thoughtfully along the broken level of the heaving sea. "Ay, there is a chance."

The meditating pauses gave way then to more incisive speech: "Help me get off my oilskins. One hand at a time, and between us we can do it. And don't be so everlastingly afraid you'll fall overboard. There—there's the oil-jacket. Now the boots. Let 'em go. 'Tis no time now for economy—better them than us.

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Now the oil pants. There—the clothes'll come easier. Damn, but these wet underclothes—they're like another skin, aren't they? There now," and he stood up on the bottom of the dory, swaying easily to the up-heave of it. "Br-h-h—but the air's cold. The water's warmer." And, dropping down by the bow, immersed himself to the neck.

"What you going to do, Martin?"

"I thought of tryin' to swim to the vessel."

"W-h-a-t!"

"W-h-a-t—why not?"

"Why, who ever heard of such a thing? You'll never make it."

"No? And what then? Will I be any worse off than you here? There's no chance for us to be picked off to-night, and the skipper won't shift his berth to-night, for the very reason you said yourself—he'll think we're looking for the vessel. And so he'll wait where we can find him, as he'll think. So, even if it clears up to-night, which it won't, he can't see us, and so no chance for us before morning. And you can't last till then, you say. And there's one chance for me to make the vessel. Straight up the wind she lies, may be three-quarters of a mile, maybe a mile."

"K-k-k—and if you don't? Like a speck you'll be on the wide ocean, tossed around in the

On the Bottom of the Dory

sea and pushed back on the tides, till you're used up, and then——”

“Save your pity of me, boy. I'll not suffer like you here. I'll wear my body out—that's true. But no long fear to wear my mind out. I've known them that went crazy in straying dories, and we're not only astray but upset. I'll fight till I'm used up, and then, before I know it, I'll sink away like a child to sleep, and 'twill be all over, and I'll be gone where I expected to be gone before this—where I surely expect to go some day.”

“Oh, don't talk like that. But, Martin, if you do make it? Just think, you might make it—you don't know your own strength. It's common talk, Martin, your strength. Will you come back to me?”

Martin cast the other's imploring arm from him. “Come back? Heavens, man, for what do you take me? Come back!”

“What do you mean by that, Martin? You will or you won't? Oh, Martin, I know what's in your mind. And I know what that'll mean to me? Before morning I'll be standing before the God that made me, and, Martin, I'm afraid. Martin, did Malachi ever hint to you of anything between me and you and Sarah? Ay, he has. I know he has. Malachi never did like me much, but since we left on this trip he's hated me. He

On the Bottom of the Dory

drew part of it out of me one night on deck, and I remember how afraid I was to pass between him and the rail for fear he'd take it into his head to throw me overboard. And he would, if he made up his mind to it, and no fear he wouldn't sleep sound after it. A terrible man, Malachi Jennings, and hates me. Ever since he saw me at Sarah's house before we left home this trip, while he was on his way to the dock to go aboard the vessel, he's had a grudge in for me. And that's what's between you and me, though neither of us has spoke of it, all this trip. Dory-mates are we, and yet like strangers. Martin, I'll tell you the whole truth. Sarah had promised to have me—in a way. At first she said that she couldn't make up her mind; but next trip in, she said at last, she'd have me if—if——”

“If what?” The naked man in the water rose up beside the other, his shoulders and back uncannily white against the dark sea, and the face white, all white but the staring dark eyes.

Harry drew back in alarm. “Don't look at me so, Martin—don't! She said yes—if she weren't promised to somebody else before the vessel went out.”

“If she warn't—to somebody else.” Martin repeated it slowly. “And,” after a pause—“and she wasn't either.”

“Why, no. It couldn't been plainer, of course.

On the Bottom of the Dory

She was expecting you'd ask her before we went out this trip. And I thought you would. And I knew you would if I hadn't been there, and so I took care you'd see me at the window as you crossed the street to come up to the door; and I laughing so, you didn't come in, but went on by, and she sitting in back couldn't see how it was."

"And she promised you?"

"Well, the same as that. 'If I'm not promised to anybody else when next you're home—if I'm not—I'll marry you,' she'd already said, not knowing that you had come to the door and gone away without ringing."

The white body sank into the water, and like a strange voice the words came back to the man at the plug strap. "You see our chance—the tide is almost slack now. In an hour now 'twill be setting to the southwest, and the westerly tide at its height is here like a mill-race—'twill carry you and the dory out of sight long before morning. But in the next hour or two you won't drift far from here, and I'll try and make the vessel. If I do, I'll be back with a dory, and we'll find you, don't fear. And don't get discouraged if I'm gone longer than you think I ought to be. I may not make the straightest course for the vessel, for, after all, she's a small speck for a man to be scanning the wide ocean for on a dark winter's night

On the Bottom of the Dory

—and a man's head so low when swimming that he can't see too far. But they're keeping the fog-gun going—there it is again; but fainter, which means that we're further away than we were. They'll keep it going all night. Malachi would stay awake a week to do that for me if there warn't another soul aboard her. Malachi and me—we like each other pretty well, and I hate to think of leaving him. But I'm going, and in case we never see each other again, good-by to you."

With a great fear Harry saw the white shoulders slip away from his side. From the level of the dory's bottom he gazed along the sea, till he could no longer see the gleam of the white skin. He listened, and faintly he could hear the strokes of arms and legs kicking through the water.

Suddenly it flashed on him—it was all a trick! Why hadn't he thought of it before? Martin, a mighty man in the water, would make the vessel. And Martin would not come back. And why? Because he, and not Martin, had her promise. That was why. She would never go back on her word, not while he held her to it. But if he were lost, how easy it would all be for Martin! And for her, with Martin, there would be small regret for his own self dead and gone.

"Martin! Martin Carr!" he shrieked. "Don't leave me! Don't leave me here alone!"

On the Bottom of the Dory

But no word came back to him; and he could no longer even hear the steady, powerful strokes of Martin Carr struggling with the heavy waves.

Now and again the swimmer lifted his head and sought to pierce the darkness, but even from the crest of the rolling seas he doubted if he could have made out the vessel ten feet away. Rather to rest himself than for any other purpose were those little pauses—'twas a long road before him.

Onward he strove. In smooth water or on a clear night he would have had but small doubt of the outcome. Straight for her light he would steer then—it would mean only lasting it out. Even if he were hours on his quest he would have made it in any kind of light; but now there was only instinct for his course, and the chill of the water was numbing his muscles, even as the over-roll of the waves, which he could not always forecast, sometimes caught him unawares and took his breath away. It was hard telling at times whether he was going ahead at all. Once he looked back to see if he might make out the dory and thereby judge of his course, but in a moment he realized how foolish that was. Certainly his judgment could be no longer sound, which meant that his strength, like the tide, must be ebbing. And recalling the man on the dory's bottom: "Blast him, he's no good—he never was—and for myself I could've

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hung on till morning. Yes, and a lot longer, but now I'm in for it."

He battled on and found his brain was not altogether dulled. All the tales he had ever heard of men lost in fog and snow came back to him; all the men that ever went astray in dories and were found later, dead from hunger or exhaustion, or it might be frozen stiff, recurred vividly to him. And that man back there, what if he were—? Yet he was worth no better—and a good woman to have him, and Sarah above all women! Faugh! What was right? That he should return and get him? Would he—if it was the other way about—come back for him, Martin Carr? Would he? Martin laughed aloud to think of it, even as he struggled.

Bo-o-o-m! At the report fresh courage came back to him. It seemed nearer. A long battling and it sounded again—Bo-o-o-m! Again—but what a long wait between! Martin could barely lift his arms through the sea, he was that tired, and began to realize that the end might be at hand, and with the thought all the stories he had ever heard of men drowning alongside the vessel flashed into his brain again.

Bo-o-o-m!

"What an everlastingly mournful sound—like minute-guns for the dead."

B-oo-o-m!

On the Bottom of the Dory

"Fainter, that's sure. I'm falling off. You've got to bid higher up, Martin Carr."

Bo-o-o-m!

"Nearer, but no time yet to waste breath in hailing."

Bo-o-o-m!

Still faint it was, and yet from out of the snow loomed phantom lights and high, vague shadows of phantom sails.

Boom! The flash of it was almost blinding, and the shock enough to deafen. No phantom gun, anyway. "God! I must be *some* tired," he observed; "so near and not to suspect it"—and lifting a hand he felt the side of the vessel. But there was nothing to hold to, and the sea threatened to throw him against her planking. Patiently he shoved off and made for the bow. And not till then, with a hand to her straining cable, did he hail.

To Malachi Jennings, on watch and somewhat worn with anxiety, came the first faint call. "God! spooks!" he muttered. "Spooks from out the black sea—if a man believed in spooks."

"Hi-i—the *Ariadne!*" a stronger hail, for to Martin by then the breath was returning.

"No spook that," exclaimed Malachi, and looked about uncertainly. "Where away the dory?" he shouted.

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"No dory, Malachi, but a tired man wants a hand!"

"Martin, by God!" and he leaped for the knight-heads, and there found him, by now clinging to the bobstay. Over the bow dropped Malachi. "A ghost, Martin, I thought it was first;" but no further babbling before he took a turn of a line about the white, naked body, and directly had him on board.

"Where's Harry? Glory be—God forgive me for saying it—but is he gone?"

"No, but waiting, Malachi."

"Waiting? For who? for what?"

"For a dory to be put over and pick him off. He's lying—so"—Martin's arm pointed—"a good mile—ten miles, I thought it one time. But call it a mile straight down the wind."

"And would you go back for him? For that chalk and water image of a human being? God, man, it's all in your hands now—leave him there."

"No, no, no, Malachi—we must do what's right."

"And what's right in this case? A creature like him to be placed ahead of you? He never was any good nor never will be, while you—man, leave this to me. Sometimes disillusioned men like me win hope of heaven by watching out for overtrustful men like you, Martin Carr."

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Footsteps hurried toward them. The skipper's face broke into the yellow circle of the riding light under which they were now standing. "What's it, Malachi? And what's that—a man?"

"It's Martin, Skipper. His dory's capsized, and he's swam aboard."

"Man alive, how did you? And where's Harry?"

"Gone, Martin thinks, Skipper;" and to the tired man whispering: "Hist now, leave it to me," and turning to the augmenting group on deck: "Quit asking him questions and give him a mug of coffee."

"Sure, a mug of coffee—this way, Martin," and helped him below.

Into the fo'c's'le Martin staggered, and, his nakedness covered, dropped on the locker nearest the galley stove, and drank the mug of coffee they brought him. Before he had quite finished they poured him out another, and sat around and discussed the fate of Martin's dory mate.

"So Harry is gone? Well, that's hard, too."

"Yes, though I never could warm up to him; but when a man's lost it's different."

"Poor Harry! Well, there was a bit of good in him, too. And lost at last!"

Martin had been coming out of his stupor. He gazed from one to the other. "Who's lost?"

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Harry? Who said he was lost—me? No, no—God, man, no!”

“What, he’s not! Not lost, you say, Martin?” It was the skipper himself who grasped his arm.

“No, no, no! Over with a dory and put her straight for where I said and you’ll get him. And keep the gun going all the time, never a let-up—play tunes with it. By that he’ll know I’m aboard and ’twill cheer him up while he’s waiting. Over with a dory—quick!”

The skipper jumped for the companionway. “Sling a dory over the side.”

“Ay, go straight down the—” but the reaction setting in, he leaned back with closed eyes.

“That’s enough, Martin.” Malachi was beside him on the locker. “You’re tired, man—turn in. You told me how the dory bore. I’m going in her with the skipper and we’ll get him.”

Martin gazed blankly after the retreating boot-legs of Malachi, and rubbing his forehead and turning to the cook: “What was it he said?”

The cook jumped to his side. “Martin, man, you’re all gone. There, you’re staggering again. Another mug of coffee now. And here, tumble into this bunk.”

The creak of the rope and block came down to them from the deck. Martin, about to roll into the seductive, handy bunk, hesitated, turned out

On the Bottom of the Dory

onto the locker, and, gazing up the companion-way, asked: "Isn't that the dory?"

"Sure."

A splash on the water dented the tense silence below. "There, she's over the side, Martin. Don't worry—they'll get him, the skipper and Malachi."

"Malachi? Let me by. Stand aside—aside, man!"

"Steady, Martin. You're weak—lie down."

"Weak?" He tossed the cook to the fore-bulkhead and rushed on deck. Malachi was pushing the dory from the side of the vessel. "To wind'ard, Skipper," he was saying. "Straight up the wind, Martin said."

"No, but to le'ward, Skipper, straight down the wind—and to make sure, I'll go myself," and leaped from rail to dory.

"Oh, Martin, Martin," groaned Malachi—"A great soul you, but, sometimes, I think, a damn fool too."

Down the wind went the dory.

THE BLASPHEMER

The Blasphemer

THEY were fitting out the *Julia Haskins* for a salt-fishing trip, and a cask of beef was about to be hoisted aboard. An easy package it should have been for the three lumpers to handle, two on the dock to hoist and one to guide and receive it on the vessel's deck below; but these were careless—one paused midway to look at an incoming Italian bark. "They say she's got twenty thousand tubs of salt in her hold," he observed. "No!" exclaimed his mate, and also turned his head. Down between dock and vessel plopped the cask.

The lumpers, leaning over string-piece and rail, gazed down at where it disappeared in the muddy water, then stood up and eased their souls with three separate strings of oaths; particularly he who was most to blame, whose eyes had been first diverted by the green-painted bark.

The man who should have been most concerned, master and owner of the vessel, he who would have to pay the bill, did not step a foot nearer the scene of the catastrophe; merely looked toward the men at fault and said: "I callate that's gone. You

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might've been more careful, Charley, but get a move on and go ahead with the rest of the stores. And one of you go up to the office and tell 'em to send down another cask of beef."

Old Peter and the usual staff of assistants up in Crow's Nest had observed the incident of the cask. And now, when they saw that the cask was gone beyond all hope of salvage, they all drew long breaths and began to talk at once. "Did you see that, Peter? And he never let a yip out of him. Why there's some skippers would have skinned those lumpers alive! And swear? Why, just imagine what"—and named, one after the other, a dozen well-known masters of vessels. "Why, they'd been a smell of hot copper blowing up here long afore this. Why is that, Peter, d'y' s'pose?"

Peter turned to them. "Why d'y' s'pose? It's before any of you were old enough to be allowed to loaf around here; but if you won't let that fire die down, I'll tell it. Pity among seven of you you can't put one piece of wood in the fire." He had to stop then to put the glasses on a sail that was lifting above the horizon at Eastern Point. His face had taken on a sudden animation. "It's queer now if it should be *her*—but time enough," and carefully laid down the glasses.

"This man below, Jed Stevens, that never

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opened his mouth a while ago, where many another man might 've considered he had justification, came of a family of swearers. He had an older brother, Lewis, was the awful man at it. I mind there was a partic'lar main boom that the owners sent down to his new vessel one day and Lewis didn't like the looks of it, and swore so hard over it—four lines of rhyme he made of it—that he went home and died. Busted a blood-vessel or something. Well, when Lewis died everybody said that Jed would keep up the reputation of the family as he'd grow older. And he did. For sheer out-and-out capacity to swear I d' know but what he could outdo Lewis. Only he couldn't make poetry of it. However, he was the awful man with the language, and for that reason alone hard to get along with. Good men don't care to have a skipper swearing at 'em day and night. Men used to come and go with him so fast that he rarely carried the same crew two trips in succession. His own brother Mark—the youngest of the three brothers, a fine young fellow, and who didn't have the gift of swearin'—left him that way. And that worried Jed, who thought a lot of Mark—a lot more than ever he let on. He went out of his way to get him to come back, but Mark said: 'No; when you learn to control your tongue, I'll ship with you—not till then.'

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“In those times Jed used also to get pretty drunk now and then. One trip he started out that way—kept the jug between his knees all the way to the grounds, and never moved to his meals, just sat there and drank—straight from the jug, bothering with no mug or glass on the way. The second night out it came on to blow pretty hard, and the vessel began to groan under it. But luckily not much sea in the beginnin’, and also lucky, it bein’ winter, that she warn’t carryin’ her topm’sts; but even with her four lowers it was gettin’ too much for her. She was rolling down outrageously, but nobody dared to take any sail off her without the skipper’s orders, and he was drunk in his bunk, half comin’ to himself, and getting up for another drink every few hours, swearing while he was drinkin’, and then rollin’ back again.

“Well, the old *Jonathan Edwards* dived along, taking most of it aboard. We could do nothing but batten down everything and let her go, hopin’ the skipper would come to himself before ’twas too late. He did come to after a while—sixteen hours on end he’d slept—and rolled out of his bunk and began to notice things. First, he noticed that the companionway was closed tight. ‘Open up them hatches and give us some air,’ he snarled, and a string of blue oaths with it.

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“The boards was no more than slid out of the way when a sea came pouring into the cabin and set everything that was loose adrift. The sight of the water didn’t soften his temper any. He swashed around in it in his stockin’ feet and swore harder than ever. ‘That’s what I like to see,’ he says—‘the old girl givin’ herself a bath,’ and a second deluge piled up over the lockers and into the lee bunks.

“He thought he’d take a look outside then, but hadn’t got his head out the companionway when down upon him tumbled a little mountain of water—it nigh to floated him down the cabin steps. Well, he swore and blasphemed worse than ever at that. He’d go on deck, he would, if the entire blasted ocean was to roll over him. And he did, not yet altogether sober, and climbs out on deck and holds on by the wind’ard corner of the house.

“‘You blasted, blear-eyed dogfish, how’s she behavin’?’ he roars to Ben Garland, who had the wheel.

“‘She’s not behavin’,’ Ben fires back at him. ‘She’s got more sail on than any mortal vessel should.’

“‘But this is no mortal vessel—she’s the devil’s own, and I’m the devil’s own boy. Did you know that, Bennie? No? Well, that’s what—I’m the devil’s own boy, and you’re one of my crew. And

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the Old Boy'll stand by his own, never you worry,' and more of that kind of talk, and then, crawling over to the main riggin' and happening to look to wind'ard, he spies for the first time the *Grenada*, a fine vessel which had come upon us during the afternoon.

"He begins to swear at her and at her skipper. 'There he is, Bob Miller, the dog's whelp, who took my brother away from me,' and then from cursin' Miller, began cursin' the sea, and back again to the *Grenada* and Bob. 'But I'll head him off—I'll head him off. I know the little spot he's beating up for, and I'll be there and have a dory over afore him.'

"And the wind kept comin' harder, and everything aboard her under an awful strain. There were queer lights on the water and her sheets were like iron bars. 'Skipper,' calls whoever it was to the wheel, 'if you don't take something off her soon, I'll cut.'

"'You cut and I'll cut you—cut your blasted head off.' But 'twarn't blasted nor no such mild word *he* used, but a word that made my blood run cold. 'Go for'ard, you milk-and-water son of a she-wolf, and let a man take the wheel. Cut, will you? Cut? Not if her trucks was rolling under. Go for'ard.'

"With him in that state of mind we ran onto the

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grounds and alongside the *Grenada*, which being a big sailer, a lot faster than the *Jonathan*, was there hours before us. It was a wicked morning. On the *Grenada* they were hove-to, with only the watch on deck, plainly waiting for it to moderate before they'd put a dory over. The skipper ran the *Jonathan* up under the *Grenada's* quarter and hailed. Everybody came on deck at his voice. Jed's young brother, Mark, I mind was there—a fine-lookin' young fellow he was, too—the pride of all Jed's people.

“Young Mark called out, ‘Hello, Jed!’ for with all the other's backslidings he couldn't help having a young fellow's affection for an older brother. But Jed didn't notice him, only began to swear and blaspheme at Miller.

“‘And so you're afraid to put a dory over? And there's owners that give your kind a vessel, Bob Miller? Well, I'll show you up—and right now.’ And, ‘Wind'ard dory to the rail!’ he orders.

“Over on the *Grenada*, as we could see, Miller could hardly believe it; but seein' our dory to the rail, he began to get nervous, for, you see, the partic'lar spot—the Gully 'twas called, new discovered then—was full of halibut, and whatever skipper got their trawls out first would get the fish in the first of their hunger. On the *Grenada* they didn't want to put their dories over, no more

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than we did on the *Jonathan*, but you know how it is—no crew of men goin' fishin' likes to stand by and let another crew shame 'em. And no skipper is goin' to stand by after bein' dared as Bob Miller was by Jed Stevens. No, sir, he isn't goin' back to Gloucester and have people throw that in his face as he walks down the street. So Bob orders a dory to the rail, too. Through the mist we could barely see him, we havin' drifted away some by then, but bein' to looard we could hear his voice.

“Well, we all felt that no dory could live in that sea, but what could we do? The last thing a man wants to have said of him is that he's afraid to do what other men stand ready to do. We hoisted the dory, and Ben Garland threw in two skates of trawls. Ben's and my dory it was. Over went the dory and with it Ben and myself to the rail, him to the stern and me to the bow falls, waitin' for a chance to leap into it. Ben leaped and I leaped. And then came a roar, and over us like a tidal wave tumbled what I thought was the whole blessed ocean. Up against the side of the vessel went the dory smash! and kindling wood was made of it. Across the rail of the vessel I went close by the main riggin', which I grabbed and clung to till the crew helped me aboard. I was the lucky man. Two of my

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ribs stove in, but I didn't know that till later. But not so Ben. 'Peter's all right, but Ben's gone!' I heard somebody call out, even while I was still floating around on the break tryin' to find my feet. The next thing I heard the skipper shriekin' like a mad man, 'No, he ain't—I got him!' And, sure enough, he had grabbed Ben as he was goin' by the quarter. . Even as we looked, Ben, with the skipper's help, was climbing over the rail. 'Didn't I tell you the devil takes care of his own, Bennie?' the skipper was sayin', and began a new blaspheming to make your blood curdle.

"Suddenly somebody yells, 'Let the main sheet run!' I looked and saw the squall, and, knowin' what was meant—that she'd never stand with the mains'l taking it full, that she'd capsize or else take the spars out of her—with a couple of others I jumped aft, all of us roarin', 'Your main sheet, Skipper!'

"The skipper, still blaspheming at Ben, didn't make out what we were so excited about, and when I rushed for the sheet, and he saw what I would be at, he grabbed me. And then we had it, the pair of us wrestlin' for the sheet. His hand was to my throat and my fingers to his windpipe. I mastered him and was about to cast off the end of the sheet when it came—a blast of wind and the

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followin' sea, and over she went on her beam ends.

"We considered ourselves gone then and rushed up to the wind'ard side of her to hang on to what we could and for as long as we could before she went down. And while we were clingin' there, some in the fore and some in the main rigging, Ben and myself on what part of the wind'ard quarter was out of water, the skipper all at once gripped my arm. I c'n feel the grip to this day. 'Peter, Peter, look there and tell me d'you see it, too! Maybe it isn't so, Peter.' He was crouched over the rail, his body shrinkin', and one hand up to his head as if he was afraid something was going to strike him, and what I could see of his face was the color of one of the gray seas that was hissing around us in the queer light of that wicked morning. And he took his hand down and looked again from the vessel, searching the crests of the nearest seas to wind'ard, and we looked where he was lookin', and there was nothing. And we said, 'Where, Skipper, where?' and looked again, and that time we saw what it was—close by the vessel's side now. Driftin' by under her counter, under our feet almost, it was—the dead body of Mark Stevens, the eyes from out of the drenched dead face staring up—God, yes—at his brother, as if reproaching him. 'My judgment!' says Jed, that time not

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even raising his voice. Man, 'twas awful, and as we looked it drifted off astern of the vessel and sank slowly—slowly—from out of sight—if you can imagine a body sinkin' that way and at the same time bein' buffeted about in the sea. Lookin' farther, we saw what was left of a stove-in dory atop of another curvin' sea, and we knew what had happened. They had tried to launch a dory same as we did. And what had nigh happened to Ben, my dory-mate, was what had actually happened to Mark Stevens, and our vessel bein' nigh and to looard of them, his body had been tossed down to us." Peter pressed the lids over his eyes. "Terrible—terrible—but so it was."

The Italian bark had come to anchor, and Peter had to stop to admire her. "A handsome craft that—aye, a noble vessel. Why don't we have fleets of those under our flag? And twenty thousand tubs of salt I hear she has in her. And there!—Jed Stevens 'll probably take his salt from her—four hundred tubs he gen'rally takes. And when he's wet four hundred tubs he'll sure have some fish in her hold." Peter paused while he glanced down to the *Julia Haskins*, in whose stern was now her skipper, standing with hat off, gazing seaward.

Peter's eyes shone with pity. "I've seen him

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stand there and look out like that a hundred times. And always quiet, just like you see him now, and as if wonderin' at something or other out to sea; as if he was fearful of something or other—as I believe he is. And now with that vessel coming in—but maybe you noticed a while ago that he never looked over the side of the vessel after that cask of beef sank almost under his feet? That's because it went down under her port quarter. To this day he can't bear to stand on deck and look under the port quarter of a vessel. At sea he won't even heave the lead from her port quarter—he'll bring her to on the other tack before he'll do that. It was under her port quarter he saw his brother's body drifting. He'll look far away and off from that quarter, but never down and under her counter."

"And he don't blaspheme any more, Peter?"

"Blaspheme! I don't believe he ever even *thinks* of blaspheming now. No milder-mannered, nor more temperate man sails out of Gloucester to-day. Queer how human nature works, isn't it? I used to think that long before this he'd be back to his old ways, but he never has. But let me see." Peter directed his glasses toward the horizon. "That one standing in—it *is* the old *Grenada*—the sight of her on the horizon brought it all back to me. A dog in her day, the *Grenada*."

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She sailed five mile to the *Jonathan's* four that passage out, spite of the sail we tried to carry. And took us off—lassoed us off the deck of her afore she sank that morning. Let me see—seven weeks on a halibut trip—'bout time she showed up. No, Jed don't even swear any more. But, man, man, what he had to go through afore he came to it!"

THE COMMANDEERING OF
THE LUCY FOSTER

The Commandeering of the Lucy Foster

THE word had been passed that Wesley Marrs was in from another slashing trip from Fortune Bay; and sure enough there was the matchless *Lucy* tied to her dock, but no sign, at the moment, of her redoubtable master. However, a hint from the crew and a search disclosed him—but of all places!

In Perry's, the picture framer's, was Wesley, leaning over the low counter; and a sheet of brine-stained paper was in one hand, and his face was smiling as a sunlit sea. "And do a good job on it," he was saying to the clerk; "oak, or cherry, or ebony, or whatever 'tis is the swell thing in frames. And— Hah? who?" At another word from the clerk he looked toward the door. "Hullo-o-oh, boy! Come in, come in. What? Somethin' doin' when I got that, did y' say? Was there! Ho—ho—ho—was there?"

"We was in Fortune Bay," began Wesley, "layin' to old John Rose's wharf in Folly Cove.

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And John had thirteen or fourteen hundred barrels of frozen herrin' spread out on the scaffolds and along the beach near by, and 'twas a sight you'd sail a hundred mile to see—they fine, fat, frozen fish layin' out there under the winter sky. And John and me'd pretty nigh come to one way of thinkin' about a price for them same herrin', when along comes the Gover'ment cutter. And they hails me, and asks me if I didn't think I'd better be gettin' under way and headin' for home, or anywhere else—it didn't matter much where, so long's 'twas away from the Newf'undland coast.

"Nacherally, I said I didn't see why I should, and mildly enough, too, I said it—mildly enough, that is, considering. There was differences of opinion, to be sure, on the herrin' rights of American and Newf'undland fishermen, but one man's opinion was as good as another's till it was settled.

"'But no man's opinion ain't nigh as good as the Gover'ment's,' says the cutter's commander, and damn abrupt, too, he was.

"'I dunno,' I says. 'It depends on whose Gover'ment's——'

"'Well, my Gover'ment's, gen'rally,' he lutts in again; 'but this time *your* Gover'ment's.'

"'When I see it I'll believe it,' I says.

"'Well,' and he whisks a paper out of his pocket and slaps it under my nose. An American

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newspaper, too, it was, which you think'd have a good word for Gloucester. You know the paper, and I know it, which's never yet hesitated to slam Gloucester's interests. Now it had the opinion of this chap in Washington, and we all know *him*. You know how long he'd hesitate to sacrifice Gloucester and all New England—yes, and the whole country, if need be, for a foreign policy of his that three-quarters of the people of this country don't want. This interview with him said that the contentions of the American fishermen as to their herring rights could probably not be upheld before an international court of—m—m—adjudication, that's it. And on another page, the one where this was put—no pictures or dispatches—editorial page, yes—Curtin pointed out more to the same effect; that no doubt Gloucester would come to her senses now and that may be the legislators, the Congressmen and the powerful Senator, who had hitherto succeeded in blocking the wheels of international something or other, would halt—and so on.

“‘What do you think now?’ says Curtin; ‘your great American statesman.’

“‘Great slush!’ I says. ‘And him an American? Why, he's no more American than you are, Captain Curtin. He only happened to be born in America. Why, he's got as much use for most

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American people as for gorillas in the jungle. He probably thinks men like me and the gorillas pretty near the same class. Gover'ment by him?' I goes on. 'Why, his notion of a good Gover'ment is to have the laws so that the puffy-eyed, heavy-jowled chaps from the mahogany offices can sleep easy nights. Anything that interferes with the comfort of that kind of people is bad Gover'ment; but for you and me and men like us—the men that have to sail the sea, and them that dig in the mines, that cut the timber in the winter woods, or that plough the prairie, or do any of those hundred things whereby a man brings something into his country that wasn't there before—to hell with us! You blasted lick-spittle! d'y' imagine I'm intendin' to be bound by your notion of what law is?' I says and punches the picture of his whiskered face in the paper. I only wished I had himself instead.

"Oh, I was good and mad, and the thought of them herrin' that old John Rose had spread out there, it didn't make me feel any better. I turns to Curtin. 'Do you really mean that I got to get out this bay?'

"'I do just that, Captain Marrs,' he says. 'And to make sure that you do go—for I can't stay hangin' around here forever to watch you—here's a gentleman will see that you do. I've instruc-

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tions from St. John to put this gentleman aboard you, and his orders are to stay aboard till you're well out the bay.'

"Well, I was fit to be triced to the main riggin'. But he had me, his steam-cutter and his guns; my vessel locked into a little harbor and not so much as a duck gun aboard. So, though I hove some lovin' glances back at old John Rose and them fourteen hundred barrels of fine, fat, frozen herrin', I swings the *Lucy* out, with the gentleman from St. John's wavin' pleasantly from the *Lucy's* quarter to the commander of the cutter on his bridge.

"This chap the cutter had put aboard to watch me was a new appointee of the Crown, he told me. He meant well enough; but why is it so many of those chaps think there's something about themselves that's so much ahead of anything that can ever come out of you and me? A large man, he was—not big, but large—you know that kind—pleasant-lookin' enough, only his eyes had about as much color and fire as a boiled hake's—you've seen the washy eyes of a boiled fresh hake—yes? Hah? Goes better if it's well salted? It cert'nly do.

"And so, I callate, would this chap, who began to tell me all about himself right away—had been up and down the coast of his own country in some little steamer on some Crown commission or other,

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and never seasick in his life. No, sir, never. And maybe so, though to offer that as proof that you're cut out for a seaman is about as sensible as to say that if the smell of fresh paint don't make you sick to your stomach then the Lord intended you for a painter. Ain't that about so? Sure it is. But what this chap didn't know of the sea! He told me of his coming across the Atlantic. One day, though, it did blow! My word, yes. Near as I could make out, she took some water over her bow one day and wet down some fat old unsuspectin' ladies that was baskin' on the sunny side of the main deck. A great storm—yes, it must 've been.

“Just outside the bay the *Lucy* ran into a nice breeze o' wind, and I took the stays'l off her, for you see she'd started her topm'st on the run down, and I misdoubted the stick 'd stand the stay'l and that gaff tops'l both pulling on it to once. If it warn't the stick was weak and I expected to use it later, I'd no more taken that stays'l off that day than I'd taken off my undershirt 'cause of the heat—and it the fourteenth of December. But seeing it come off, this chap says, 'Hah, the storm too strong for her, Captain?'

“‘Storm?’ I says. ‘What storm? And too strong for the *Lucy*? For the *Lucy*!’ I says, and as I'm standin' here 'twas no more than the

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pleasantest, cheerfulest, agreeablest weather imaginable—a proper sailin' breeze, just what a doctor who'd ordered a sea voyage for an invalid would 've had, with no more sea than to barely save the gang from washin' down decks next mornin'.

"Thinkin' his remarks over during that night while we were rolling about outside the bay put ideas into me. And thinkin' again of them fourteen hundred barrels of fine, fat, frozen herrin' back to old John Rose's made me say to myself: 'Wesley, but you'll sure go down in Gloucester's history as cert'nly a damn fool if you don't manage to get them herrin', statesman, cutter, and Crown commissioner, notwithstandin'.'

"And the breeze makin', d'y' see, I turns to the Crown job chap. 'By the way'—and I was deferential as hell, don't you think I warn't—'by the way, sir, where was I to take you to?'

"'Why, out of Fortune Bay.'

"'Yes, but then where? We're out the bay now.'

"'Why, I'm sure I don't know.'

"Well, I thought that was about as intelligent as he looked. Didn't know! Get's aboard a vessel and don't know where she's bound. But it was good business for me, and I gave him time to think it over. His was a brain that needed a lot of time before it got to workin' so you could notice it.

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“‘Why, where *are* you goin’ to?’ he asks after a while.

“‘Well, my home port’s Gloucester.’

“‘Gloucester? That’s in the States, isn’t it?’

“‘What!’ I says.

“‘Yes, yes, I think I’ve heard of it, Captain. Oh, dear me, yes—a fishin’ village, but I don’t remember seein’ it on any map.’

“Well, I could have hove him over where he stood—a fishin’ village! Village! There, thinks I, is another of them that imagines that in Gloucester the fishermen live in little huts on the beach and every evenin’ after putting out the cat, we takes a lantern and looks our little boats over, and, maybe with the wife and children to help, hauls ’em a foot or two higher on the beach so the flood tide won’t float ’em off durin’ the night. Village! And not on the map! ‘Why, you pink-haired tea-drinker,’ I came near sayin’ ‘Gloucester’s all over the map.’ But I didn’t. I did say, though, ‘Gloucester’s the greatest fishin’ port in the world,’ a bit warm may be.

“‘Oh!’ he says.

“‘Oh!’ I ohs after him. ‘And I don’t know but what I’ll run for there,’ but at the same time, mind you, havin’ no more notion of goin’ home without a load of herrin’ than of dumping our grub over the side.

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“Well, the air ’round there freshened up, till it got to be what you might call a tidy little breeze o’ wind, and the *Lucy*, bein’ light, was hopping something scandalous. We’d taken out, d’y’ see, most of her ballast before leavin’ home, but so she mightn’t blow over altogether on the run down to Newf’undland, we’d stowed away about thirty tons of small rocks in her. But in anticipation of gettin’ them herrin’, all that loose rock that was intended to keep her from capsizin’ had been hove out alongside old John Rose’s wharf in Folly Cove, and now she was up on top of every wave like one of them empty air-balls that you sometimes see dancin’ on top of a column of water out on the front lawns of swell houses.

“Now, mind you, this warn’t no bad gale o’ wind all this time, but ’twas plain enough our passenger thought the devil and all was runnin’ amuck over the ocean. May be the *Lucy’s* behavior helped out the notion. There’s nothing logy about the *Lucy*, you know, even when she’s got all her hundred ton of pig iron cemented next her keelson. But now she was leapin’ like a gamb’-lin’ goat on a green mossy hillside, only there warn’t no moss growin’ anyway ’round *her*. But ’twas cert’nly amusin’ to watch her—that is, if you were acquainted with her ways and knew she meant no harm.

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“But this chap knew nothing of the *Lucy*'s qualifications. And he knew damn less of the sea, and pretty soon he was grippin' the weather riggin' and, by the expression of his face, wonderin' how much longer, I guess, before she was goin' to the bottom. I'd no notion startin' off that his features could hold so much emotion. And the crew were lookin' properly scared, too, for I'd tipped 'em off early that they mustn't be too gay when on deck. 'A tempest of this magnitude,' I says to them 'is a terrible thing. So behave according.' And they did.

“After a time I told the Crown chap I thought he ought to go below and have a mug of coffee, and 'twas ticklin' to see him pull himself together for that dash to the hatch. He cert'nly must 've thought he was takin' his life in his hands when he let go that riggin'. What I wanted to get him below for was so he'd have a look at what loose water was on the floor of the forec's'le, for, of course, you know it's nothing again' the *Lucy* if, after her years of hard drivin' and sail-carryin', her for'ard planks is a bit loose. Cert'nly not. Only nacheral—sure—that's what I say—three-inch plankin' bein' only three-inch plankin' after all. In the forec's'le the men were swashin' around with the water to their knees. It's a sight I've noticed that always impresses a shore-goin' man.



Our passenger thought the devil and all was runnin' amuck over the ocean.

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It cert'nly impressed the Crown appointee this time. He gets one good look—'My God!' he says, 'she's sinking!' and rushes up on deck and takes a fresh turn of himself around the riggin'.

"Then, to help things along, I pulls Tony, the cook, into it. 'Didn't I see you with a pair of rosary beads the other day when you was overhaulin' your diddy-box?' I asks Tony. And he says yes, he had a pair his wife gave him, and I asks him wouldn't he get 'em out and do a little prayin' where he could be seen. 'Why for? why for?' demands Tony, quite indignant, mind you. I had to explain it to him. 'Now, Tony,' I says, 'it's this way. Half the sea stories that's ever been written has always some kind of a dago, when 'tisin't a Frenchman, droppin' to his knees and mumblin' his prayers when maybe he ought to be cuttin' away the spars or mannin' the pumps. And what I want you to do now, Tony, is to go up on deck and live up to your reputation.'

"Well, Tony'd be damned if he would, and said there was never a Portugee yet didn't have more courage, even if they didn't write books about it, more than any damn Englishman that ever lived. England? Huh! Where was they when Alfonse Hairikay, where was they when Bartly Diaz, where was they when Vasco da Gammar or some such chap, and he mentioned a dozen other

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names that I'd never heard of before, and I doubt if anybody else ever did. Even Jim Riley, who's something of a schoolmaster, said they were past him.

“‘Now, Tony, I know all that,’ I says. ‘I’ve had your kind for twenty-six years, and in that many winters and summers in small vessels on the North Atlantic a man does see some blue times. I’ve never seen one of you quit yet; but that ain’t it, Tony. ’Tisn’t your national pride now, Tony. Consider, Tony,’ I says, ‘them fourteen hundred barrels of fine, fat herrin’ up to Fortune Bay, and the wad of bills you’ll be handin’ over to the wife, and the children. And Tony, consider them black-eyed, curly-haired rascals rollin’ their little blue wheel-barrows or haulin’ their little red sleds all over the hill this winter, if ever the *Lucy* sees them herrin’ in her hold, for if ever she does, Tony, all the cutter commanders and Crown commissioners and statesmen from here to hell won’t get ’em out the *Lucy* till the gang hoists ’em out to her dock in Gloucester.’

“And Tony warmed up and said he would, only he wouldn’t use no rosary. He took a pocket-ful of yellow-eyed beans out of the stores instead, and goin’ up on deck he flops down by the for’ard hatch, as near under the lee of the dories as he could get, one eye out for what comfort there was,

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and starts in. And not such a bad job, either. He lowers his head to the deck and says something. And he looks aloft and says something, I don't know what. But I know that with every bend he takes a yellow-eyed bean out of his pocket and heaves it overboard; and up and down, heavin' the yellow-eyed boys over, he goes on. And Jim Riley—he never passes the Crown commissioner without makin' an act of contrition. 'Oh, oh, oh, the sinner I've been!' moans Jim, by way of completin' the picture.

"All this time the vessel 'd been workin' back toward the bay and Fortune Head warn't far away, and all at once a ledge of rock shows up under our lee. We waited till the passenger saw it, which he did pretty quick, for you c'n be sure he warn't overlookin' any of the nacheral dangers. 'Rocks!' he yells. 'Where—away?' says I, and springs to the riggin', with my hand shadin' my eyes. And half the gang on deck springs to the riggin', and every blessed 'one of 'em shades his eyes with his hands and says, 'Where away, sir?'

"'Off to stawboard,' says he.

"'Sure enough,' I says, and 'Sure enough,' repeats the gang, and, 'Cripes, but what an eye that gentleman's got!' adds Riley.

"'We must work her off,' I says.

"'Will you be able to?' inquires our friend.

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“‘I dunno,’ I answers, ‘whether we will or no, but I hope so, ’cause it’s a bad place—and the harbor of Saint Peer is around the corner,’ I added, which it warn’t, knowin’, too, that all he cared to know was was it solid land. The Pewee Islands would ’ve suited him just then—anything, I cal’late, that warn’t floating around loose in the ocean.

“‘Yes, I’ll try to make it,’ I goes on, and I gathered the crew together and tells ’em we were in a tight place and to die like men, and read ’em a lecture on our priceless heritage and the immortal courage of our ancestors. Did y’ ever try to make up such a speech as you imagine a man like our passenger ’d like, and have listenin’ to you a couple of Rileys and Sullivans, and a Frenchman from the Miquelons, and a few others whose grand-people had been privateersmen in 1812? No? Well, you don’t ever want to—it’s disturbin’. I winds up mine by suddenly, much to his surprise, yanking Tony off the hatch. ‘You cowardly dago, be a man!’ I says to Tony, and he didn’t like it. A little more and I think he’d mutinized on me.

“And we were makin’ out fine, only just when the passenger was almost brightenin’ with joy came more danger. The *Lucy* got caught aback—myself to the wheel, yes—and down for the rocks she was borne. Well, there were the jagged devils

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all but under our stern, and that man sweated blood from his very heart, I'll bet, before she took the wind again and was safe away.

"Man, but how the gang standin' round deck puffed their cheeks at each other! Everybody but Tony, who'd gone below disgusted. Some of 'em was even more thankful than the passenger, you'd think, and he was shrinkin' up again' the lanyards, that he hadn't let go for a second in the past four hours. 'My God!' he gasps, 'what a narrer escape!'

"'Narrer? Well you might say it!' I says. 'The narrest I've had in twenty-six years of fishin'. And after that, you c'n see, sir, it wouldn't do to try and get by those rocks to make Saint Peer.'

"'No, no, no,' he says; 'but can't you run her in some safe place?'

"'There's one place I could safely make for with the wind the way it is,' I says. 'There is just one place in the world where I could go,' I says, 'but I'm not allowed to.'

"'Where's that?' he says

"'Fortune Bay.'

"'Why not, Captain? Why not? In case of life or death——'

"'Not even for life or death, sir, could I without the embargo was lifted off the vessel. If I was to put into Fortune Bay now and the cutter find me

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there, my vessel would be confiscated by the Gover'ment.'

"Them light-colored pop-eyes of his almost took on a shine. 'But wouldn't my orders release you?'

"'H-m,' I says. 'H-m—I hadn't thought of that. Do *you* think it would, sir?'

"'Why, of course it would. If the Crown's agent can order you to do a thing, then the Crown's agent can release you. The home Gover'ment takes precedence over any colonial or local Gover'ment. Can't you see that?'

"'Well,' I says, slow and ruminatin'-like. 'H-m—I dunno—m-m——'

"'Look here,' he breaks in, and you'd 'a' died if you could seen him clingin' to the lanyards, taking a fresh hold every once in a while when a hog's-head or two of spray would break over them. And whoever was to the wheel always took care he got 'em reg'larly—you'd 'a' luffed, though Lord knows, nothin' but death itself could 'a' unhooked the grip he had to begin with. Well, to hear him there tryin' to overcome my objections to goin' into Fortune Bay—Jim Riley, passin' by, had to say, 'And are people really taxed to give jobs to the likes o' him?'

"'That'll do you!' I says to Jim.

"'What was it he said?' asks the home Gover'ment chap.

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“‘Only his weak heart,’ I answers him, ‘sayin’ if we don’t do something soon we’ll be lost—vessel and all hands.’

“He broke into fresh argument then, but I didn’t give in till we both happened to overhear Dal Hawkins saying to Riley: ‘It’s fine to have respect, same’s the skipper has, for the Crown; but I do hope he’ll change his mind soon, for cert’nly it’s beginnin’ to look blue for us around here.’ Dal’s speech made a great impression. You know Dal—a hard, gray-faced, serious man, the iron-nerved man of the old story books, y’ know—yes.

“‘Well,’ I says, ‘when Dal Hawkins talks of death and danger, maybe it’s time to do something, and I’ll go, provided, sir’—and I looked judicial as hell saying it—‘provided you’ll make it a command and put it in writin’.’ And we went below and got out pen and ink, and when he thawed out some he wrote it out. And never a suspicion entered the soul of that Crown appointee while he was writing it out why the vessel lay so easy. Hove to, y’ see, so he could write, she was layin’ like a duck in a pond. Up to that time we’d been puttin’ her any old which way to make her hop.

“He was done at last. ‘There it is, all properly worded,’ he says, and read it out. And there it was—and here it is now again.”

Wesley reached across the counter and took the

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paper from the clerk. "Here it is, listen—dated December the fifteenth.

"To whom it may concern :

"It is by my command that Wesley Marrs, master of the American schooner *Lucy Foster*, returns with me to within the limits of Fortune Bay, there to land me at some port to be later designated; and it is also by my command that the said Wesley Marrs be allowed to remain with his vessel, the said *Lucy Foster*, at some safe anchorage within the limits of the said Fortune Bay until the violence of the present storm shall have abated."

Wesley paused. His auditor, looking over his shoulder, interjected, "But there's more to it."

"Sure there is, a tail to it—postscript, yes. I'm coming to that—that's separate. 'Twas me made him add that on after he thought 'twas all complete. When you're on a job there's nothin' like doin' it up right, is there? Sure there isn't. Well, listen," and Wesley read further:

"*P. S.*—The said Wesley Marrs wishes it understood that he does this much against his will.

"Warn't that a good one—hah? Much against his will! And violence of the storm! Ain't that good—hah, what? And when we dumped him off at a little port, Charlemagne, just inside the bay, he was that grateful he gave me a cigarette-holder, a beautiful little yellow thing with gold

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edges—here 'tis, see—about as useful to me as one of those Japanese kimonos that's marked three forty-eight in the store windows these days. But when I get up to the house I'll make a whistle of it for the baby.

“Well, after we'd put him ashore I sent word by a jack over to old John Rose's place, and was intendin' to wait for dark to slip out after it; but one of the gang who'd rowed our passenger ashore—and nacherally stopped to have a drink while he was there—came back with the word that that fool Crown man 'd been tellin' the natives what a narrer escape the vessel had off the harbor o' Saint Peer, and they got askin' him all about it, and one of 'em, gettin' more curious, says, ‘What time was it you left here?’ And he tells him. ‘H-m,’ sniffs the doubtin' one, looking at the clock, ‘she's a big sailor, the *Lucy Foster*, but she no more than any other vessel ever built can come forty-five mile in an hour an' a half.’

“And so we decided, without waitin' for the further judgment of the Crown, that the violence of the storm had abated, and put over to old John Rose's place. And we anchored to a spring cable in Folly Cove that night, and cert'nly them herrin' looked beautiful as so many solid silver fish in the moonlight.

“‘He, he,’ cackles old John. ‘I knowed ee'd

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be back. How much, Wesley, be un goin' to give for them herrin?"

"A dollar and a half, John—say twenty-one hundred dollars and not stop to count 'em. That is, John, I would only for the Crown law, John."

"Perish the Crown!" says loyal John. "Twenty-one hundred dollars—take 'em away."

"We loaded by night and we loaded by day, and when all was below I drove for open water, for I was afeared the word 'd been passed to the cutter. And sure enough it had, but not till we were abreast of Canaigre did we get a sight of her. We warn't so far off but I knew Curtin could see the *Lucy* was drawing a whole lot more water than she lawfully should—his law. But what he really thought about it we never learned. We didn't let him get near enough to tell us, but to help enlighten him I had Riley in his schoolmaster's hand make a fair clean copy of that Crown document. And I marked it '*attest*' and a '*true copy, Wesley Marrs,*' and further put on the gill of a herrin' by way of a red seal, and rememberin' that in my coat pocket was a length of ribbon I pulled from off my little girl's head before leavin' home, I got that, and cutting off about four inches of it, pinned that on by way of a blue seal, and I said, 'There, my royal commander, there's a proper Crown document for you,' and stuffed it in an empty quart bottle of the three-

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black-letters brand which Dal Hawkins 'd been usin' for linseed oil, he said—but no smell of oil in it—and corked it tight and made it fast to an old keg and hove the whole thing overboard.

“And by and by we could see them hauling it over the side, after which I didn't linger around, but takes out the chart and draws one straight line from Cannagire Rock to Cape Sable, and another from Cape Sable to Eastern Point, and down them two lanes, with fourteen hundred barrels of fine, fat, frozen herrin' in her hold, the *Lucy* came a-snortin'.”

Wesley turned to the clerk. “And be sure you do a good job on it, Joe. Don't spare no expense, mind—the best of oak, or cherry, or ebony, or whatever's the latest thing in frames. And when it's done I'm goin' to tack it over the little oil painting of the *Lucy* on the east wall of what my wife calls the drawin'-room. And',’ Wesley turned toward the door—“what's that? A little touch? Well-l-l, seein' it's so brisk a mornin', and the fifty-odd cold hours we was on the passage, I don't know but what I owe a little somethin' warmin' to my system.”

In the saloon opposite Perry's, with the hollow of one foot resting on the under-rail, an elbow resting on the bar, Wesley poured out his drink and raised it up, but presently set it down again to gently roar: “Hah! hah! ‘by my orders, and

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much against his will does Captain Marrs do this'! Ho! ho! And yet," reflectively, "that wants a finishin' touch. By rights I ought to been there when Curtin met that Crown chap—and be sure he did—and pointin' that out to him, asks him, 'But did you *really* write that?' Hah, hah! ho, ho! Well"—Wesley raised his glass—"hopin' that every cargo of herrin' out o' Newf'undland will come as easy, and that we'll never meet any worse Crown chaps than that one—here's a shoot!"

"And now"—Wesley hauled his cloth cap down over his brow—"to see about them herrin'. I was offered three twenty-five coming into the dock, but I think I c'n do a shade better than that, for you bet there won't be any herrin' come out of Fortune Bay in a hurry again. And if I get three-fifty, say, it won't be too bad, will it—hah—for a poor ignorant fisherman that don't know international law from a Japanese proclamation of war? Oh, we poor slobs o' fishermen! Hah, hah! 'Much against his will, and by my orders'! Ho, ho! wouldn't that melt any loose ice you might have 'round your deck—hah, what? But don't mind me any more. Come on down and lay your eyes on the *Lucy* again. She c'n most talk, that vessel. Come and have a peek at her."

And out the door and down the street swung Wesley, whistling blithely.

THE ILLIMITABLE SENSES

The Illimitable Senses

IT was one of those nights that sometimes come to Georges: air without motion, sea serenely still.

One by one the men coiled in their lines, left their berths by the vessel's rail, salted down the fish, went below, turned into their bunks, and soon were sleeping soundly. All but three or four, who, with the passenger, were not yet wearied; and these presently began to wonder, and, after a while, to venture guesses as to when the skipper would come below. They could hear him walking the quarter, evidently striving to tread softly, but clearly failing, for one who had a mind to sleep, turning again in his bunk, cried querulously, "I wish the old man 'd get out of those red-jacks."

"Hush, boy," interposed old Bob, who knew the skipper longest; "something's vexed him. He'll work it off, and then he'll come and tell us what it was about."

And he came below at last, but not yet in his usual good temper. Plainly it was as old Bob had said—something had vexed him; and as nobody as a rule, has much to say on a fishing vessel while

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the skipper is put out about anything, so now respectful silence held the cabin—held until, after the various uneasy movements and rumbling sighs which in him betokened disappointment as well as vexation, he at length settled into his chair and began the preparations for the long-delayed night smoke; whereat gentle leading questions were inserted into the silence, first by old Bob, then by the less venturesome, all with a view to draw the master, who took no immediate heed, but exactly cut the tobacco and filled the bowl, carefully tamped the brown weed with his forefinger, and smartly drew the match across his thigh.

Pu-u-f-f! pu-u-f-f! pu-uff! puff! Gradually he established a good draught; slowly the marks of annoyance faded from his brow—which, incidentally, was a fine brow, with noticeable development above the deep-set, glowing eyes, and of a white that lay like a broad band between the bronze of cheek and chin below and the iron gray of the thick hair above. At length, as he would have said himself, he eased his sheets and let her run.

“Did ever, when you were walking along the street, hear a child utter some foul word that he probably no more knew the meaning of than if ’twas a bit of some foreign language? Yes, of course. We all have; and never heard but what we felt—not angry, altogether, but grieved and

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shocked to think of what an upbringing that child was getting. Well, that was something like the way I felt to-night when up on deck young Russell, because some little thing went wrong, had to curse and swear and blaspheme as he did. He said things, and at his age no more notion of the awful things he was saying than the little child that utters oaths on the street—oaths that he's heard his elders using. I stopped Russell, of course, after a while; but my mind's been on it since. I tell you I don't like it. I'd known young Russell's father—ship-mates we'd been for many a year before he was lost; and thinking of him up there while I was walking the deck alone a while ago, I got to thinking of our own young days, and the *Didymus*, and that night which none of us who were there will ever forget—the night Eb Stone was struck down at the rail. Bob there was one of that crew, and he, too, has been a changed man since. You never heard of that?"

The passenger had heard of it from a dozen sources, but never a first-hand version of it; and so "Never from one of the crew," he answered now.

"Well, you'll hear it now from one who was there, and then you won't wonder, maybe, why I was so disturbed a while ago. This time I speak of the *Didymus* was hand-lining on Georges here,

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and those few of the crew now alive are a good many years older than they were then. Young fellows all we were, few of us more than twenty-five, and proud of our notoriety as the most blasphemous crew that ever sailed out of Gloucester. To explain how that crew came to be that would be a long sermon on one thing or another—hypocrisy mostly. They came from people who were more concerned that the world should think well of *them* than that they should themselves do right. These young fellows weren't old enough then to have got to where they could separate the true from the false; and so, seeing their elders preaching one thing and practising another, they come to the way of thinking that what their elders preached, as well as their elders themselves, must be in the wrong. From fearing God too much they come to fear Him too little. And so with them 'twas a daily riot of scoffing, blaspheming; mocking what men should hold holy. Maybe some of them pretended to be worse than they were, after the manner of young men at times; but there they were, that hard crew of the *Didymus*.

“Well, this trip they were doing the usual things in the usual way, invoking the devil, defying the Almighty, profaning sacred things. A common thing with them when they went to their berths by the rail, before they hove over their line to fish,

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was to throw over a copper or a nickel—generally a copper, they coming mostly of thrifty ancestry—and, as it dropped into the sea, to call by name the particular power they had it in mind to ridicule. ‘Come up out of the sea, you fork-tailed Beelzebub,’ they’d call, casting in the coin, ‘and show us your horned head till I clout it with an oar’; or, ‘Come up, whoever You are that knows all and sees all, and scare me blue, as they say You can.’ But that’s as much as I dare repeat now, though one time they slipped off the end of my tongue as the swash off a rolling deck.

“And so it came to the night that Eb Stone came on deck, saying he couldn’t sleep, and guessed he’d fish for a while. There was nobody else awake at the time but me. I was on watch and tending to my line, too, as a man on watch quite often does, when he’s not overtired and the night is fine. Having to stay awake anyway, a man might as well be fishing and adding to his store as be doing nothing. This night when Eb came up I thought it would be a good chance to go below and get a mug of coffee. Eb could have an eye out, and there was no danger anyway, for it was a wonderfully fine night anyway—’twas the look of to-night made me think of it, even as much as Russell’s words a while back—clear as could be, except for the little spats of clouds drifting across

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the moon and throwing small, little shadows onto the sea. A quiet sea it was, too, the same as it is to-night, smooth as the oilcloth on this cabin floor. A wonderful night altogether, I couldn't help remarking to Eb as I was about to drop below.

“‘Yes,’ said Eb—to the rail he was then and ready to bait up—‘mighty fine night to get a hook into a few people from the other world. I wonder, now, would I pull up a devil if I was to throw a penny over?’ and picked up his line to overhaul it. ‘And bring my knife from my bunk when you come up, will you, Ned? But no hurry—there’s a couple of baits here still fresh enough to use.’

“The last thing I saw as I sank down the companionway was Eb ready to cast over his line as he stood by the rail. Well, I drew a mug of coffee from the pot on the stove. It was wonderfully quiet below as well as on deck. Not a sound from out of the bunks, where a dozen men were sleeping. You know how, among ten or twelve healthy men, there will always be two or three, at least, to turn and toss, especially if they’ve eaten a hearty supper; but that night they were all breathing like infants. Unnaturally quiet, altogether, I was thinking—so quiet that before lifting the mug of coffee to my lips I couldn’t help looking toward the bunks again to make sure there really

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were men in 'em. Yes, they were occupied—of course 'twas foolish ever to doubt it. And yet, after that, I had to look up the hatchway to assure myself again by the sight of the peeking moon and the little patches of drifting clouds that I wasn't in a dream. But there they were, all the tranquil heavens.

“Well, I began to grow lonesome then—almost called to Eb once, just for the companionship of a human voice; but I thought again how foolish that would be, and turned to my coffee. The coffee was good and warm, and with two or three mouthfuls of that inside me I began to feel better. And yet I looked up the companionway to the sky again—and I simply couldn't get over it, such a supernaturally quiet night it was!

“And all at once, while I was looking up—I never knew why, certainly I didn't intend to—I set down my cup of coffee, and I found myself trying to catch my breath; which couldn't have been for any lack of air—there was plenty of air, the companion slides drawn far back—but my lungs seemed not to want it. It didn't smell right to me, that air—it really didn't. 'Twas like something decaying. And, trying to pick up the mug of coffee again, my fingers felt numb. I grew scared, I did. ‘What in God's name is the matter?’ I heard myself saying, but not like

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myself, either—much as though it was somebody else talking. ‘But I *will* pick it up,’ I said, like somebody was daring me to do it, and grabbed the mug of coffee suddenly, as though I was afraid somebody would really stop me. And I got it, too, but my fingers barely on the handle when such a shriek! Just one shriek. There wasn’t any notion to compare it to anything then, but I’ve often thought since that if ’twas a lost soul being dragged over the brink of hell I’d expect he’d shriek like that.

“One breath before, and I thought nothing short of a call to judgment could have waked that crew for’ard; but with that cry from above every man of them leaped from his bunk. None of ’em needed more than boots and trousers to be dressed, but some, not even waiting for that, rushed on deck to see what it was. Eb’s berth was on the starb’d side, just for’ard of the fore-rigging; and there we found him, stretched full length beside the rail, his feet to the cleat under the pin-rail and his head almost against the drumhead of the windlass. And that wasn’t all. His line was cut clean off at the rail; not broke off, nor bit off, but cut clean off as with a knife. Said somebody, ‘He must have cut it himself,’ and we looked for his knife, and couldn’t find it. And then I remembered Eb couldn’t have had a knife on deck—he’d asked

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me to get his from his bunk when I dropped below for a mug-up. And, sure enough, under the mattress in Eb's bunk we found it, where he always kept it when he wasn't fishing; and nobody else's knife was missing from its place.

"We looked out to sea then, and there wasn't a thing there—no craft, no light, no sail, no floating thing of any kind; and 'twas the kind of a night, too, to see far, but nothing there; only the awful quiet and the drifting bits of clouds across the sky, and the little shadows they threw on the sea, which was itself so smooth that not even the play of the everlasting tides was rippling the surface of it.

"We carried him below, stiff and motionless, and laid him on the cabin floor. We called to him; and before his eyes, wide open and staring up to the roof of the cabin, we waved things, even the tin-type of his girl we took from the shelf in his bunk. But not the smallest twist of his lips, nor quiver of his eyelids, to show that he heard or saw.

"There was nothing to it but put for home. So we up-anchor; and I mind how mournful sounded the clinking of the chain through the hawse-hole, and winching in, there were men on that vessel who dreaded standing on the side of the windlass where Eb's body had lain. Arrived in Gloucester

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harbor, we carried Eb to the house of his only brother, and there we laid him on the lounge in the parlor. And an awful duty that—bearing a dead man in from sea.”

“But *was* he dead then, Skipper? I always heard——”

“Well, as to that, he was dead, and yet he wasn’t dead. He lay there stiff and stark, with never a word or moan, and the doctor came; and another doctor came; and another doctor came, but none of ’em could say what was the matter with poor Eb. And seven nights from the night he was struck down the last flutterings of his heart stopped entirely.”

Tick, tick, tick, went the cabin clock. Tick, tick, insistently, until it gained the skipper’s attention. “Aye, I ’most forgot her,” said the skipper, and stood up to have a look. “She’ll be a few seconds fast, I’m thinking,” and compared it with the superb little chronometer that set in a polished cedar case in his room. “But only a few seconds—gains maybe four seconds a day. Pretty good that, when you allow for the pitching of the vessel and where it has to hang. But it was always a great little clock that,” and [this last he almost whispered. “’Most nine o’clock already.” Carefully he replaced the chronom-

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eter, and presently closed the stateroom door behind him.

The passenger turned from the blank door to old Bob. "Surely he's not turning in?"

"'Sh—!" warned old Bob.

And silence held the cabin again, till the door was slid back, and the skipper, resuming his chair and leaning forward, fastened his gaze on the hot coals in the stove.

"But, Captain"—the passenger was consumed with curiosity—"during that seven days and nights, didn't Eb Stone ever come to sufficiently to offer a word of explanation, any word or sign to throw a little light on the matter?"

At sound of the passenger's voice the skipper came out of his reverie. Tightly he closed his eyes, as if to shut out the pictures in the fire, and over them pressed his tense finger-tips. "Eb? Never a word. He died without speaking."

"But didn't the doctors have anything to say?"

"What could they? They wanted to cut poor Eb open, but Eb's brother wouldn't stand for it. 'No,' he said, 'it's something more than doctors can explain,' and had him buried without an autopsy."

"And what did you think yourself, Captain?"

"Think? Well, 'twould take a long time to say, but I know what I *did*, and what effect it

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had on me. From the day of his burial I made up my mind never again to cast ridicule on things that other people venerated, simply because I didn't wholly believe in them. I began to see that there might be things in the universe that my brain was unequal to grasping. And——”

The passenger was about to offer a theory, but the skipper raised a protesting hand. “Wait a bit with your scientists. And adhering to that, I came to be a better man. And from being a better man I came to have the courage to marry a girl that I'd almost begun to think was never to be for me; and, marrying her, life began to take on new aspects. It was no longer hard and gray, though 'twas terrible enough at times—mostly through fear for her. For one thing, she had not exactly a dread of the sea, but a dread of what it might do to me—in winter-time especially. You see, she was the kind that knew—whether I was near her or away from her didn't matter—she knew when danger threatened me. She'd wake out of her sleep at night—many's the time she's told me, and the children have heard her too—and cry out my name and pray to God to save me. And when next I'd get home, after I was quiet and calm under the home influence, and no distress to hear it, she'd tell me, and, coming to look into it, sure enough I'd find that on the night or day, at

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the time she said, myself or the vessel was in more or less danger. Sometimes I had to strain my memory to find grounds for her alarm, but there'd nearly always be something, maybe some little thing, that any man would forget two minutes after it happened, but yet a terrible matter 'twould be to a timid and loving woman ashore."

"*'Nearly always,'* you said, Captain?"

"Nearly always, that's right. There were times when I couldn't discover the least ground for her fright; occasionally, on coming home from the calmest trips imaginable, she'd have her fears to tell. And when I'd laugh at her then, she'd only say 'twas there just the same. 'You don't know what might have been threatening you in the dark and you not able to see it,' she'd say.

"Well, in the course of time I got to be a different man. No man could've been married to my wife long and not be; and I got to appreciate her, and coming home from sea and meeting her again got to be what I lived for. I came, too, to believe in the mysterious power she had of knowing how things had gone with me. Even when there'd been no particular danger, she'd know whether I'd had a hard trip or a pleasant one; but saying nothing of it at the moment, she'd meet me at the door with just the word to suit my feelings, though,

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again, as I said, never any long speeches till I'd been made comfortable generally.

“At last it came to what I want to tell you about. I'd got a fine little chronometer for taking some people off a wreck, and by and by I took some off another dismantled vessel—at great peril, as the resolutions went with 'em said, though 'twas just an ordinary sea running at the time. But, anyway, I got another chronometer, both the same winter. And my wife says I must give her one and keep one on the vessel. Which I did. There in my room, now, is mine—you saw me go to it a while ago. By it I take care to set the cabin clock every few days, and after every trip I take it ashore and compare it with my wife's at home; and if they don't agree have them corrected. But they need but small correction. They are both good chronometers—sometimes those rescue ones are that way—and these two'll almost tick for tick for months together. Which is just what my wife wants; for every night, exactly at nine o'clock, she has the older children kneeling by their bedsides and saying a prayer for me. She prays with them. And I've got to where I say a prayer myself aboard the vessel at the same hour, if the weather'll allow. And there's where the chronometer comes into the story. You all know of the last gale out here on Georges. Of course. Fourteen vessels and one

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hundred and sixty-five men lost that night. Every third man and vessel of the hand-lining fleet went down inside twenty-four hours. We were in that gale—this same vessel, and no particular praise to me or the crew—and a fine crew, too—that ourselves and vessel came out of it safe. And how was that? I'll tell you.

“A wicked night it was, and we trying to buck our way off the Bank. Wind? Lord knows, maybe ninety or a hundred miles an hour 'twas blowing. Frightful—yes. Under a two-reefed fores'l we were, and that was plenty. Black as hell, and seas to your masthead. All around us we could hear the calls of men in peril, with their voices, when sometimes they'd rise above the wind, like the cries of ghosts in the night. Suddenly comes a bolt of thunder and a flash of lightning, so bright and sudden as to blind us almost, and in the glare of it we saw the other two vessels. It was like seeing when you're being photographed in a flash-light group at night—the sudden report and glare, and the other people being seen suddenly—and then darkness again, with a ringing in your ears, and you trying to keep your eyes from blinking after it. 'Twas that flash of light saved us. There were three vessels of us about to come together, and you know what happens to vessels that come together on Georges in a gale. We saw

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them, just time to shift the wheel and to scrape by, the *Smuggler* to one side and the *Barmecides* the other. Man, but 'twas close!

“But more wonderful than the flash of lightning or our being saved and the two other vessels being lost—which they were—we could hear them grinding together and their calls in the dark—and, worst of it all, we couldn’t help, and they went, God rest ’em! But the wonderful thing—just at the time of the flash, which we easily fixed by the cabin clock—old Bob there was to be relieved at the wheel on the hour, and the new man on watch had just looked at the clock, that same clock which I then as well as now kept to exact time with the chronometers, he’d just taken a peep and said, ‘Less than a minute now,’ and had drawn on his mitts and had one foot on the companionway steps there to go on deck, when the flash came. Well, ashore, as it happened, which it doesn’t always, it was bad weather that same night, too, and my wife was feeling worried, but not worrying enough to make any fuss over, for she knew that it might be bad weather in Gloucester and good weather on Georges. The children were sitting around reading or playing—she was nursing the baby—when all at once she set the baby down and got the children together, she didn’t know why, and all in a moment. ‘Children,’ she said, ‘Anna, Jack,

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Tom, Irene—on your knees, quick! and pray for your father——”

“‘Why, mamma, it’s only eight o’clock, an hour to bedtime yet,’ says Irene.

“‘H’sh! your father’s in danger—pray with me now!’”

“And they repeated the prayers after her, and the chronometer tinkling eight bells as they prayed, little Irene turned her head as if to tell it to hush. It didn’t seem right to her that even the striking of a clock should be allowed to disturb prayers.”

The skipper drew the sensitive finger-tips slowly down over forehead, eyelids, cheeks, and jaw. “Eye-ah!” he sighed, and slipped feet out of slipshods, and, after another pause, slipped suspenders from shoulder to waist, and went to the companion-way, and there for a while stood, head above the house, for a whiff of the air, and presently returned and faced the passenger.

“And what do your scientists make of that?”

“Oh, they’ve long been working on the question of psychic force.”

“H’m! and consider it, most of ’em, a disease of the nerves, hallucination and so on. Well, my wife’s not one of those that take in mysterious séances in darkened, smelly rooms. She’s a healthy, lovable woman, with eight healthy, handsome children. Now what?”

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“Well, telepathy’s admitted by some.”

“By some, yes, but half doubting. And others?”

“Well, superstition.”

“Superstition, that’s it. What they don’t understand, whatever’s beyond their dull imaginations and souls—for the average scientist is weak in what we agree to call a soul—whatever’s beyond them they say bah! old superstitions! And why? Lord knows, unless it’s because they can’t explain it. Now there will always be the so-called scientists, and useful people they’ll be, too, and yet more useful if they weren’t so fond of overrating their mission, which is to deal mostly with facts, so-called, of the physical world—things you can measure with a bushel-basket or a tape, or weigh on a pair of platform scales. If only now and then they wouldn’t consider all but their own cold-blooded kind deficient in intellect and would try to explain, instead of destroy, the faith in so many things that make for the betterment of mankind. These men who dabble in laboratories should really follow behind. There is where they might become useful. A hundred things we might quote, but take the one thing that all the world is interested in now. Take wireless telegraphy. Now, before the days of wireless telegraphy, you had your scientists, didn’t you?”

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“Surely. They were very active, too.”

“Aye, and so are ants, though mostly by way of example, and they mustn’t mistake their little sand-heaps for Himalayas. Well, suppose we say one hundred years ago, or fifty or sixty years ago, before the cable was laid, a man came to them and said, ‘The other day I sent a message across the sea—from a point in Newfoundland I asked a question of a man in Ireland, and got his answer.’ What would they have said to that man? We all know what they’d have said. Well, suppose, again, that to-day a fine old lady, who has lived a full life, loved and married and borne her brood of children, and her children after her borne children, too, and some have lived and some have died—she has christened her quick and waked her dead, her own and her children’s children—she’s had great joys in her life, but mostly she’s had great sorrows, and from out of her life has come much thought. And all her life she has been trying to get nearer her Creator. Well, she hears in the night the cry of a beloved—at the other side of the earth he may be. He is in danger, and she hears his cry, his prayer for rescue, his wail of despair. He is dying, and she hears his whispered hope for pardon, and she speaks of it with tears, actually choking with the thought of it. And what is said of it? ‘She is an old woman,’ they

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say—your friends the scientists, I mean now—‘she is an old woman—can’t read or write, possibly. Dreams,’ they’ll say; ‘don’t mind her.’ And soothe her as if she were a child. And so she is hushed, but something within her is still unsatisfied. And there it is: Marconi in Newfoundland tunes up his instrument to so many vibrations a second, and a man in Ireland, with his instrument—whatever ’tis called—tuned up to the same number of vibrations, gets his message. In their symbols they communicate, and thereby prove the truth of what in an earlier day your friends would label superstition. Yet Marconi is only proving in the physical world what that saintly old woman is doing continually in the spiritual world. All her life she has lived in God. Why can’t she, towards the end of it, have the eyes that see, the ears that hear, the divinations that us ordinary fleshly people never have. We know people that would as soon smell a cabbage as a rose, who see no purple in a summer sunset in the hills, who know no difference between the booming of a negro boy on a brass drum and the touch of a heaven-born musician on the violin. You talk to them, and you have to limit your speech. Live with them long enough, and you may come yourself to have the same limited senses, to see nothing delightful in flowers, sunsets, music, poetry, or in any of the beautiful

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things in life, for we certainly can lose the finer senses by gross living. Look at the little child of good parents. He knows nothing of life—knows nothing of sin, nothing of virtue, by experience; but set him down in a mixed company, vicious and good mingled. He doesn't know why, he can't explain, the poor child, but he'll turn from the bad and run to the really good. And why is that? Isn't it the finer senses, tuned more nearly to the spirit of the Great Truth?

“And again, for your people who believe nothing until it is proved to them, and proved according to their own rule; for by proof they mean something *they* can understand, something that's within their grasp, never for a moment alive to the fact that their grasp on the great things may be pitifully weak. I've had that kind out on a trip with me, and I've seen them grow—actually grow to a bigger conception of things. All their lives they've been looking out of little windows on narrow streets, and suddenly they are brought out here and set face to face with one of the great works of the universe. On a black night I've seen them stand on the deck of this little vessel—no great big seven-hundred-foot ship, with her promenade rail sixty feet from the water; but on this little fisherman, where they have only to lean over the rail and trail their fingers in the ocean. And something comes to them.

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They don't know what it is. They are then inarticulate, like the child. Something, whatever it is, too big for them to understand. But they feel it, although they never stay long enough to grasp it quite, or to let it take full hold. If they only would stay longer! But no, in a week, a fortnight, they're once more ashore, back to their little four-walled room they go again. Back to their books, compiled by men but half of whom are grown, half developed, deficient in insight, in emotions, in experience of humanity. For that little while I had them here they were different men, they were beginning to catch a glimmering of the mighty scheme—a scheme so vast in conception, so sublime in execution, that for the ordinary mind to attempt to grasp its immensity is to court the overthrow of reason. 'It is too much, too much,' I've heard them say. But back they go to their walled-in laboratories, and after a while recover sufficiently to preach with loud voices all the little truths again. And, mind you, I'm not deriding science—I'm only saying, why do they not come out in the open and enlarge their vision? A man of the hills and the prairies, they tell me, rarely doubts. And the man of the sea, this I know myself, is never a sceptic; and so to him nothing is impossible."

The last straggler sank to sleep below, and the

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passenger sought the deck, where only old Bob was; and he, a sculptured figure against the fore-rigging, might have been asleep too. So still he stood that the passenger was in doubt until he reached his side and saw that the steady eyes were really open.

"A grand night, Bob!"

"Aye, lad, grand—and solemn."

"That's it—solemn. Something like the night that Eb Stone was struck down, the skipper was saying a while ago."

"Something like that, but"—his slow eyes roamed sky and sea—"but stiller that night."

"Stiller? Than this? Then the elements themselves must have been asleep, Bob?"

"And why not? Why not to sleep, lad?"

"Sleep?"

"Aye, sleep."

"And dream, too, Bob?"

"Aye, lad, why not? To sleep and dream o' God?"

Why not? The passenger looked above and about. A notable night, not alone for the overpowering beauty—beautiful nights are not rare at sea—but for the amazing quiet of sea and sky. The passenger's thoughts came back to that other night of the *Didymus*.

Wasn't it possible that a knife was lying around

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deck, after all? And with it couldn't Eb have cut the line and let it slip overboard then? If not that, what sort of a creature—what manner of a countenance did it bear that the strong man was stricken dead at sight of it?

What was it? Was it— A hundred hypotheses took shape in the passenger's brain. But no, for thirty years the fleet had passed up that question, and in the fleet were those who dwelt ever on the brink of the Great Crossing, and who dwelt there had thoughts beyond the measure of the roof-bound peoples.

**THE JOY OF A
CHRISTMAS PASSAGE**

The Joy of a Christmas Passage

THE little man had come down to the dock, that morning, in an ugly humor. Once in a great while—their friends well knew it—he and Maggie had to have a falling out. Two souls were they that dearly loved an argument, meaning no harm thereby—merely true fighting blood they had, instinctively seeking to keep itself in trim.

Now a real man and a true woman, when both are quick-tempered and vigorous, sometimes say things to each other; more particularly the woman, impelled by the force of hereditary ages to ease the strain that way. Maggie could lightly die for her husband, but to give up the last word!—Mother in Heaven, was a woman a woman, or was she a wax figure?

Pouted like a baby did Coleman and nursed his sensitive soul and took another drink before sailing; and by that the barkeeper, an *emeritus* professor in human nature, knew that something had gone wrong and advised a friend who sailed on the *Maggie* to stay ashore that trip.

“And why stay ashore this trip, any more than

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any other?" naturally inquired the friend, who happened to be Eddie Bligh.

"Never mind why. Somebody or something 'll ketch the devil, I'm telling you." Further than that he would not explain. His secrets were professional, possibly, or perhaps he knew that, if he should say anything, somebody would surely pass it along to Captain Joyce; and then—he saw the picture clearly—no fear of the police or his own superior bulk would prevent the little man from reaching across the bar and dragging him around the sanded floor by the ears.

"Put out," said Captain Joyce, and took note of the weather—a cold day and a gale blowing. "Let ye hoist the jibs"—and he leaped from the wharf to the deck of his vessel without so much as putting hand to the rigging on the way. "And what's wrong with *you*?" he demanded of big Jerry Connors, all flying, like a man who fears he'll never catch up with his work again.

"Nothing wrong with me, but a whole lot wrong with the compass. Somebody must 've been tryin' to pull it through the binnacle, last night, and the water, or alcohol, or whatever kind of spirit 't is the needle floats around in, is 'most all spilled."

"There it is," exploded Coleman. "We pay a man two dollars and a half to watch this vessel

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of a night, and he goes up the street and yarns, when 't is the vessel he should be lookin' after. But we can't be waiting at the dock because a watchman don't tend to his business. Let ye loose yer fores'l. We'll stop his wages."

"And how'll we know her course by it?"

"Coorse, is it? Do y' need to know the coorse goin' down the harbor?"

"But when we're clear of the harbor?"

"Wait till we're clear. I'll lay her coorse, then."

This he did. He shot her through Hypocrite Channel, she drawing fifteen feet, at low tide; and then, with a hand to the wind and an eye to the compass, he asked, "Who says this compass isn't all right?—the wind's nor'west, that's sure, and there it is."

"Oh, it's all right now, but wait a minute and see it hop three or four points."

"Sure, and won't it hop back again? And what harm so long's we'll be able to see Cape Cod goin' by? In this breeze 't will be easy enough after that—a child can handle her—run ye'r mainsheet to the knot and let her go—and heave the lead when ye're not quite sure."

This was how the *Maggie* made a great run of it to Georges—to the North Shoal before the December gale—and then, sheets in and all she

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wanted, tearing down to her old favorite spot as if she knew the way, which Coleman always maintained she did. "Sure, and she does. P'int her the way ye want her to go in the beginning, then let her be, and she'll go the rest of the way herself."

But after they were on the grounds it was five days before they could put a dory over the side, which meant that it was fairly rough, for whoever sailed with Coleman Joyce learned to quail before no small spats of seas. Then came a chance for one two-tub set, after which there were four days more of laying-to, this time for a northeaster, with snow to smother them. Four days more, then, of a northwester, during which the ice made as fast as they could chop it—which wasn't a matter of much concern so long as there was time to chop it. Winter fishing calls for chopping ice pretty regularly.

Tough weather it was, but the mood of it beautifully suited Coleman, still pouting and still nursing his wrath. "Ice!" he burst out—"what the divil's a little ice? Some of ye talk as if a little ice on the deck was all in the world to trouble a man."

"And what's the matter with himself?" inquired one after another of the crew. "Did y' ever know him this way before, Jerry?"

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"I have. Leave him be. Once in a very great while he's this way. No harm! We'll ketch the divil for a few days and then 't will be over with, and he sweet as a laughing child."

Sixteen days out they were and a beautiful day it was, such a day as comes even to the storm-tossed Georges in winter, when the *Hiawatha* rounded to under the *Maggie's* quarter. To windward at the time and stretched out in a five-mile string, all tossing gently on the wonderful sea, were the little dories of the *Maggie*, with the nearest dory so handy that the little man could see the changing expression on the face of Jerry Connors when he hauled in the fish. A fine had-dock came, and Jerry looked pleased; a fine cod, and he smiled; a ravenous dogfish, and he glowered and beat him testily over the nose with the gobstick, ere he cast him into the sea again.

The gulls circled and drooped, the flakes of clouds floated hither and thither, and the sea rose and fell, and on its low white crests the little dories gently sank and lifted.

"Beau-ti-ful!" murmured Coleman; "no man ashore ever sees the like of this. A beautiful day, God be praised!" and he looked the length of the string, picking up with his keen eyes one dory after another until he had accounted for the whole ten, even to Peter Kane's, all of seven miles away.

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At the wheel of the *Hiawatha* was Dan Shea. On the wheelbox of the *Maggie* sat Coleman. Both men, masters of craft, touched the spokes delicately, with eyes roving aloft or far about for the signs of wind, or sea, or the men in the riding dories. A breeze that was like wine to a sick man played over the sea. It was a great day altogether, thought Dan Shea, for a little confidential chat.

"Coleman!"

"Well?"

"Do you know what day it is?"

"What day is it?" The little man pondered laboriously—over-laboriously, indeed—so that Dan Shea had to smother a young smile. "Why, of coorse—a Chuesday."

"I don't mean that, and blessed well you know I don't. What day of the month is it?"

"What day is it yerself?—I'm no callen-der."

"Well, it's the twenty-third. And what's to-morrow night?"

"What is it, you?"

"Well, it's Christmas Eve."

"Yes?"

"Yes. Are you goin' to be home for Christmas?"

"If I'm filled up—maybe. Are you?"

"'Less something happens to-day, I will."

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“Whether you fill up or no?”

“If she was dry as a spar-yard, yes. I wouldn’t miss bein’ home Christmas for forty loads of fish—nor would you.”

“The divil I wouldn’t. Who’s tellin’ you all that?”

“Oh, I know. Now, Coleman, what’s a word spoken in heat? Man, Maggie could kiss the wet frozen deck under your feet, and little Dannie”—Shea looked over at his sister’s husband—“and little Dannie, I say——”

Coleman put the wheel down another spoke, took a look at the luff of his mainsail, and put it up one.

Shea waited. He knew well this sensitive, loving child of a brother-in-law, with whom there was always the danger of saying the one word too much. So he waited a bit, and began again his message. “Little Dannie ran over to the house, the morning I was leavin’ for the dock, and says—‘woogh, woogh-h——’”

“You ought to take something for that cold, Dan.” The little man grinned at his shot.

“And maybe I would—if ’t was no more than a cold, Coleman. But Dannie, the tears in his little blue eyes, puts his head in my bosom and cries, cries, and couldn’t speak for so long, the poor little creature, as if ’t was his heart’s blood

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was chokin' him, and says"—Shea stood erect and gazed far to leeward—"Is that my dory or yours up to wind'ard there, Coleman?"

"Blast whose dory 't is!—what did he say?"

"What did little Dannie say? He says, 'Uncle Dan, if you see grandpa out on Georges, tell him he never came in to see me before he went away.'"

Coleman, wriggling on his box, put the wheel down a spoke, then another spoke—one more, and her mainsail shivered; another, and her reef points began to beat a tattoo; yet another, and the *Maggie* began to back down on the *Hiawatha*; and Coleman kept her slowly backing till the two vessels were so close that to bring them closer would be dangerous.

Shea, with not so much as a pretense that he was observing his brother-in-law's manœuvres, continued: "'Maybe you were asleep, Dannie,' I says, 'and your grandpa didn't want to wake you.' 'No, no, no, I warn't, Uncle Dan,' he says, 'and he never did that before.' And it's true for him, Coleman. It's the first time since he was old enough for you to set your finger between his little teeth, or him to put his hand to your beard and pull it, that you didn't come around to toss him up and down before you put out to sea—and give him change to put in his little bank. Yes, you've been spoiling him all his life and then

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you treat him like he was a stranger's child you hated. And he cried and cried, the poor little creature, and me an hour late to the dock tryin' to comfort him. And he told his mother how he wanted to tell you he'd sent a letter to Santa Claus to get him a train of cars——”

“Oh, the little lad!” Coleman walked to the rail of the *Maggie* and gazed out on the eternal ocean—gazed, and gazed, and gazed—and went back and resumed the wheel.

“And Maggie, Dan—what did Maggie have to say?”

“Maggie, Coleman, is my own sister—and a woman.”

“She's all that, Dan. For thirty-odd year now she's been proving it to me. She never wanted a tongue, Dan.”

“Nor a heart, Coleman. And she could kiss the deck under your feet. ‘Tell him, if you see him, Dannie,’ she says—‘tell Colie, if you see him out there on the wild Georges, that he mustn't be minding a word too much in heat. A woman has her bad days, too, only she can't run to sea, maybe, and fight winter storms and forget her troubles. Tell him, Dannie, that 't will be the dreary Christmas without him.’”

Coleman put the wheel up, and up, and yet up. While still Dan was in doubt as to his brother-

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in-law's intentions the *Maggie* was around on her heel. She swept in a short circle and came tripping under the *Hiawatha's* stern. "And she said that, Dan?"

"As I hope to be buried ashore, Coleman—and cried in her apron when she said it. 'Tell Colie,' she says——"

Dan waited. "Will I report you comin', Coleman?"

Coleman made no answer, only waved his hand and bore away. Dan watched him, saw him hoist his hauling signal to the peak, heard him hail Jerry Connors in the nearest dory, and thereat, his own vessel running down the string, he smiled to the immortal heavens. "He'll soon be himself again. Soon be himself again, and then—and then all hell won't stop him."

When the dories had put off from the vessel, that morning, Peter Kane, in charge of one, thought he saw a great chance to improve on his instructions. "Set to the east'ard," the skipper had said. Yet Peter and his dory-mate, in what they considered an inspired moment, had set to the west'ard—and gone far astray. And so, at eleven o'clock that morning, when, in response to the signal at the peak, the other nine dories were aboard, there was no sign of Peter's dory. At high noon the crew dropped everything and

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went into the rigging to look for it. During all that afternoon they searched. At dark, when a snowstorm set in, they were still searching. They kept the foghorn going, the anxious skipper meanwhile walking the deck like a caged animal. Suddenly from out of the snow, and almost directly under the astonished eyes of a man leaning over the bow, up popped the missing dory.

"Here they are, Skipper!"

"Where? Glory be, where? Thanks be to heaven, so it is." Then he lit into them. Peter's dory-mate, a Frenchman, was about to tell all hands what a wonderful ear Peter had—as soon as he heard the foghorn he knew just where it came from—a wonderful ear——

"And what kind of an ear did he have, this morning, when I told him to set to the east'ard? What kind of an ear, hah? Where is he?"

Men who have been astray for ten hours in a dory on a winter's day generally get a fairly warm welcome when they come alongside—not so much in words as in hearty helpings over the rail and kindly glances—but here was the skipper ready to scalp them, almost; a man, too, who was famous for the feeling he could put into a few words at other times. "God save you, Dinnie!" or Tommie, or whatever it was, "but I'm glad to see you

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again,” and with a look that would warm the heart of a squid. But now!

“Is it you or me, Peter Kane, is master of this vessel? Is it you or me, do y’ think, lays out the work and has to keep track of a string of ten dories on thick days in winter, is it? And a storm makin’, is it? Here we’ve been laying for hours and now a dead beat agin’ a no’theaster to get off the bank. ’T would make a saint in heaven swear, it would. Go for’ard, now, and help gripe the dories. Bottom up and into the hatches with ’em—double-gripe ’em so bimeby they won’t be washin’ over the rail. And hurry, then, and shake out the reef in the mains’l.”

To the man at the wheel he added, “Jibe her over, now, and time it is, too—but be easy on her till the fish is dressed, or you’ll have fish and men over the rail.” To the men dressing the fish he said, “Hurry, now, b’ys—no time for skylarkin’.” To the forward watch he commanded, “Tommie, lad, when next we tack, do you have a little blue eye out for the handliners—we’ll be in the thick of them by then.”

Through the scattered riding lights of the handlining fleet the *Maggie* worked her way, while down in the cabin the skipper, his wrath against Peter gradually spluttering out, laid himself flat on the floor and marked out courses for the

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Maggie. A forefinger was on a much-dreaded spot. "I'm thinkin' that, with the wind haulin' as 't is, I could cut a corner, maybe, off the North Shoal." He set a thumb in deep water. "Maybe—maybe—if the wind keeps haulin'." He gave a few hurried puffs, then, to keep his pipe from going out, and went on, "Nice and handy, yes," and he manœuvred the parallels delicately to the west'ard, breathing heavily the while. "If 'twas workin' to the north'ard the wind was, I couldn't, but with it workin' to the s'uth'ard 't will be safe. A fine notion, that—to cut a little corner off the North Shoal!" He climbed up on deck to consider. "How's the compass actin', Jerry?"

"She's not so bad, Skipper. Hops once in a while, but gen'rally points ahead."

"Yes, it's that way—all right when the vessel's close hauled or runnin'. I've been studyin' her the two weeks past. But, when the wind's abeam, she's the divil. But it won't be abeam till mornin', Jerry. So let her go nor'west, for the next three hours."

"Wow!" said Jerry.

"And what are you 'wowing' about?"

"Me tooth give a jump."

"Yer tooth, is it? Yer heart, ye mean. Ye think she's cuttin' too close?"

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“Twenty fathom of water—and suppose the wind jumps the wrong way?”

“Man alive, have I been thirty-seven winters to Georges for nothing? ’T won’t come the wrong way.”

It was as the skipper said. The gale worked to the southward in increasing volume, and until seven in the morning they were tearing off the rapid miles of white water from the easterly bank of the North Shoal. Came the word, then, for the home course, “West, nor’west, and keep her goin’, boy!”

The *Maggie* was then a joyful sight for Coleman or whoever else loved to see a vessel in a breeze of wind.

Clear from her knightheads to her taffrail it was nothing but water racing by as if the storm devils were driving it. All her lee dories were buried; and the lee half of her house was not merely awash, but clean buried under it. Where it surged between house and rail it was a wild torrent throwing up boiling foam. Could a tall man have gone down into the lee scuppers of her waist and held his feet, he would have been up to his neck in solid water. To keep the rush of water from below, the hatches were drawn over the forec’s’le companionway; but by way of the binnacle box [this had, of course, to be left un-

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covered], which, in the *Maggie*, was exactly amidships, with its under edge more than a foot above deck, a steady stream of water was pouring into the cabin.

An hour later, when Peter Kane went on watch, she was taking the gale fair abeam, with her lee rail buried beyond all the laws of equilibrium and a twenty-foot belt of white sea flattened out from her side. Peter had to set the upper board into the cabin companionway, which was well to windward, on this, the port tack, of the centre of the vessel's deck—to keep the flood of water from rushing into the cabin by way of the companion stairs.

Lashed to the wheel, then, with the clear water, no mere swash, to his waist, stood Tom Lenoir, better known as Tom Black, who, from out of his French patois was trying to find words to fit the airs that were suggested to him as the water swept up to his body, then rushed past the wheel-box and away over the taffrail behind him. From the French coast of Newfoundland was Tom, and they used to say of him that, since somebody stuck an axe in his head about a year before this, he had never been right. Peter was supposed to be standing watch while Tom steered, but all that could be seen of Peter was a head under the fore boom. The rest of him was made

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fast to the bow-gripes of the windward dories, where he considered that he was doing pretty well because of managing matters so that he was not washed overboard.

It is in such hours that these men with poetry in their souls create hymns which would live on to immortality were only the men of the conservatories within hearing and sufficiently at ease to use their specially-trained faculties. Peter was ridding himself of the storings of a thousand melancholy nights, and there was a swelling note in Tom's chant. A man could have gauged the rise of the water around their bodies by the height of the note in their storm songs. "They're both crazy," said one, poking his head above the cabin hatch for a moment. "They'll lose the vessel, yet." Aloud, one shouted, "You wild man from Bonne Bay, why don't you ease off that mainsheet afore you blow it off, or capsize us, or something?"

"Ease the sheet? Me? No, no, Jackie, not me, an' bimeby have skipper say, if we no get home to-night, 'Blast that Frenchie!—on'y for heem we mak' a fine pas-sage. He lose hees nerve an' ease off the sheet.' No, no, Jackie. Skipper say, 'Kip her going, and I kippin' her going, by gar!'"

"Why, of course we kept swinging her off," said Peter, when, below and his watch done, he was wringing his mitts out by the cabin stove,

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"but 'twas Tom was making all the noise. Every time she rolled down he'd holler, wild-like. Man, but there's some water on her deck now. And her foresheets are like iron with the strain on 'em. If ever they go! Blessed lucky thing, I say, we rove a brand-new foresheet afore we came out, this trip—blessed lucky, warn't it, Skipper?"

"Yes, Peter, lucky enough. No danger of it parting and delayin' us on the way. How's the compass?"

"Jumpin'-like. One time nor'west and again due west. Once in a while, though, it makes a crazy leap to straight no'th and again to south."

"But she's going along herself?"

"Man, like a message to heaven, if we only knew just which way to call it—west or nor'west."

"Oh, well, we'll strike an average and call it west-nor'west."

By and by arrived one who was soon to go on watch. He was new to the vessel and to the skipper. Apparently to Peter Kane, but wishing really to get the skipper's ear, he gave voice to his opinion. "Comin' forward now and lookin' at her, it was scand'lous. Water on her deck to frighten a man, and gettin' worse. Worth a man's life, now, to throw his life-line off for a minute. Scand'lous, I call it."

The skipper, whittling a little model of a fisher-

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man, eyed him sidewise. "Scand'lous, hah? And what's it you fear—she'll capsize, eh? Well, have no fear—this one won't capsize—the spars 'll come out of her first."

"But," gasped the man, "spars out of her on a lee shore and a day like this—where'd she fetch up? I've a fam'ly—wife and children."

"And that's the amazin' thing," exclaimed the skipper—"a fam'ly and no hurry to get home! It's because I've a wife and children—and grandchildren—that I'm drivin' this one now. Christmas Eve, man—surely you'd like to be home for Christmas? Surely! Well, then, trust to me—I know the *Maggie*, and 't is this kind of weather she was built for. I've seen plenty could beat her driftin', and a few outfoot her in a fresh breeze; but on a day like this! Believe me, b'y, the vessel of her tonnage was never launched to outsmash her—not when she's goin' home, anyway. And she's goin' home, now—goin' home." He tossed a shaving into the fire—"and to-night, barrin' what no man can foresee, you'll be buyin' monkey-jacks up on Washington Street to put in your children's stockings—yes. And I'll be home this night and fill little Dannie's stocking. But I think I'll go for'ard and have a mug of coffee." He set his unfinished model on the whetstone that lay on the floor

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to windward of the stove. "Don't any of ye dare touch that," he said.

Jerry Connors watched his legs disappear. "There's a man, now, and to see him at the head of the dock leadin' his little grandson by the hand, stuffing his little fist full of pennies and his pockets full of candy, you'd say there never was a more harmless man born. Yes, sir, the most harmless man alive, you'd say; but Lord help the man who thinks so and ships with him, and happens to be anyways nervous."

In the swash of water pouring through the birnacle box various small articles were floating about the floor, which nobody minded much until Eddie Bligh, returning from the forec's'le, let in a hogshead or more of loose water before he could draw the slide.

"Man alive, haven't we enough water already?"

"Water? Where? Here? Sure, you're fine and dry here. It's in the forec's'le y' ought to be. There's some water—a steady stream comin' down by the pawl-post, another stream by the stove, and a ton of water by way of the hatch every time anybody goes on deck, and her wind'ard planks opening up under the strain of the sail on her so that the sea is comin' through her and driving everybody out of the bunks on that side."

"And a few loose drops on the floor, I s'pose?"

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“Oh, no more than up to your knees in it—everybody wearin’ rubber boots.”

An extra heavy surge came through the binnacle box, and Eddie, standing carelessly beneath, whooped with the suddenness of it and was appeased only by the sight of Jerry chasing across the cabin after his slipshods, which had floated from the windward lockers over to the lee lockers, where they filled and sank. “Stand over by the stove, Eddie, and dry yourself,” said Peter, who had been washed out of his own after-lee bunk, hours ago, and Eddie came to windward, which brought him directly under the broken skylight. She gave a real good roll and a barrel or so of cold sea water landed on Eddie’s back. He hopped about and swore, it was again so sudden, but everybody else laughed prodigiously.

They had to cut up to forget their discomfort. Those who owned windward bunks were moderately happy, for they were fairly dry and had only to brace themselves and lie there. All others caught it. Various schemes were devised to stay in one spot. Peter Kane, jamming his back in the corner of the cabin where locker and bulkhead met, with a becket for his feet, hung fast for five minutes, to his glory. Most of them braced their backs square to the windward lockers and thrust their feet straight out on the floor, with cov-

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ers removed from the lockers, elbows hooked down inside, and so made out pretty well. But the floor of the cabin was a steep jumping place! Sometimes the vessel would sizzle along beautifully for perhaps two minutes and everybody would relax, when whoop-p! a good sea would get under her and up she'd jump, and down she'd roll, and away would go the sitters, skidding beautifully across the cabin floor, while those standing would be shot flying down and across, yelling as they went and slapping resoundingly the bare boards with their palms as they fetched up suddenly on the other side. At such times the snug gentlemen in the windward bunks would laugh uproariously, and say delightfully funny but unappreciated things between their shrieks of glee.

The skipper, returning from the forec's'le, at once got out his long sharp knife and began to whet it on the leg of his jackboot. "And what are they talking about for'ard, Skipper?"

"Oh, one thing and another—the cook complainin' of broken mugs, but the gang talkin' of Christmas and sail-carryin', mostly. There's two wild men in upper bunks and 'tis comical to see them—one in the top peak bunk and the other in the top after bunk—and with the noise of the water rushin' under her bows they have to howl like banshees to make themselves heard. Talkin'

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about sail-carryin' they were. 'I was with this one,' says the one, 'when she made such a passage,' and 'I was with that one,' says the other, 'when she made such a passage.'

"Sail-carryin'?" resumed the skipper, after a pause, and he cast an eye about as if in search of something—"sail-carryin'! half of 'em don't know what it is."

"You've carried some sail, yourself, in your time, Skipper?"

"Well, I don't know. Let a man begin to talk of what sail he's carried and he begins to boast, and, sure as fate, something happens. But I suppose, if I was put to it, I'd carry with the next. But I never was put to it; though, in thirty-seven winters from Georges, I've yet to heave-to makin' a passage, though as to that, again, maybe it never came rough enough to give cause to heave-to; and yet, in thirty-seven winters, a man sees some blue times comin' home from Georges. Yes sir,"—he cast anxious eyes about the cabin floor—"yes, sir, in thirty-seven—where in the devil's that little boat? Did none of ye have an eye to it while I was for'ard? I left it dryin' by the stove—the little boat I was makin' for Dannie's stockin', to-night. Did none of ye see it?"

"That little block of wood, Skipper? The

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time my slipshods went floatin' off I saw that little block of wood go floatin' off toward your room, Skipper."

And so they found it sailing around in the skipper's stateroom. Grief was writ in the skipper's face as he held it up.

"Look, now, soakin' wet—the little boat I thought to have ready by the time we got in. Why, Dannie 'd set more store by one little boat I'd make him than a whole fleet of them queer-painted traps they sell in the stores. Yes, indeed," and dolefully he regarded the unwhittleable block of wood. "Why, I wouldn't—Lord in heaven!"

They all felt the terrible shock. As suddenly as a sea could overtake her and strike, it came. From out of a windward bunk came Oscar Neilsen, hurled through space, touching nothing till his side struck the top of the stove. Down she went—quick as that, and just as quickly as that the little skipper took his two strides to the companionway. With one yank of his hand the usually stubborn slide was driven back. Tons of water came in as he went out. At one glance he had the situation measured. He sprang onto the house and onto the rail, the only part of her that was out of water aft, and ran along the high rail like a cat to the rigging. One instant he poised there for balance and then leaped for the saddle

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of the main mast. Then he sprang along the boom and out to where the great sail lay bellied in the water. Cut-t! slash-h! cut-t!—with the knife he had been whetting for little Dannie's boat. It was the heaviest of canvas and soaked in brine, but the little man's nervous arm made waxed paper of it.

She was fairly hove down, her spars all but flat out on the water. They watched her, a dozen men now on deck, to see if she would settle, and, in the end, turn bottom up. That was what it might mean. Because the heavy seas pounded her as she lay, that danger was probable. Many vessels would have sunk then and there. Even some fishermen would have gone down in a few minutes. But all that the skipper had boasted of the *Maggie* seemed to be in the way of proof.

"Like an intelligent horse that is thrown, she is trying to rise. Look at her! She'll come out of it all right," said Coleman but he watched her anxiously, nevertheless.

Gradually she came up, the skipper eyeing her all the time. "Beau-ti-ful! Beau-ti-ful!" he murmured.

After she righted herself, they furled the hacked mainsail, put the main boom in the chock, and got out the trysail. Soft-spoken, calm-eyed men were these, the little skipper in the van, who balanced

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themselves in her stern, crawled out on her footropes, and, while the big seas bade fair to overpower them, swiftly set things to rights.

Back in the cabin again the skipper took note of the time and sighed. "Eye-ah, a good hour lost! Who was at the wheel? Fred? Sure, and he must 've been careless to get her caught like that. But we'll make it, yet, Glory be—a fair wind, and we'll make it yet!"

On her way again the *Maggie*, now with the huge mainsail off her, would have waltzed down the line like a lady were it not that the wind increased. It was not enough that it blew a living gale in the morning, but it must come a tornado now. Even the skipper thought it time to look after things above, but hardly more than a look. "Just a bit of the foresheet to take in, b'ys, and she'll be all right."

Up they climbed on deck and gathered in groups till the helmsman would ease her. Looking out on the waters, then, the vessel seemed like something rushing about the base of great, shifting hills—dirty-green, white-trimmed, over-curling hills of water, hill succeeding hill, with the presumptuous little vessel dodging away into the valleys. There was Jimmie Curran, who, with Frenchie and Peter Kane, was standing on the break as the ship was brought into the wind. There came a little

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sea, nothing to notice. To Jimmie it looked no bigger than a dory on the side of the mountain of water off which it broke. "That's not going to bother anybody here," was Jimmie's mental comment. But even old fishermen are fooled, sometimes. Frenchie and Peter Kane were safe enough—handy to the dory tackle were they when it struck—but Jimmie went floating down to leeward. He was buried in it. As he rolled over and over in it he put out his arms to grab something. He did grab something. Jerry Connors it was, also overturned by the same deceptive little sea. "Well, if I do go I got a chum," murmured Jimmie. As it turned out Jimmie did not go that time, for Jerry, the able man, caught hold of the dory-gripes on the lee side and clung to them desperately, and from there the others, when they had done laughing, rescued them.

The *Maggie* could not go along in that breeze without various things happening. Jerry, having returned to the cabin, had not done putting salve to his lip, which, he averred, had been split by Curran's fist in the mix-up on deck, when a great scurry of boot heels was heard overhead, and a great yelling. A moment later, Fred Jones, the forward watch, slid back the cabin hatch and leaped into the companionway, all in one motion, as it were, and yelling at the same time, "Here

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comes the jeesliest sea—clear white and high as the masthead!” and to his mate at the wheel, “Hang on, Ed—hang on!”—here he drew the hatch.

“Aye, hang on, Eddie—hang on, Eddie!” yelled the cabin gang, bracing themselves for the shock, and already shrieking with glee to think of Eddie at the wheel watching the big sea coming on.

It came and hit the side of the vessel such a clip as a fast-traveling mountain of water can. Over rolled the *Maggie*. Men in the windward bunks looked down perpendicularly at the lee bunks. “No stove for me this time,” piped Oscar, and he spread himself across his mattress as a cat, with spreading claws, clings to a window grating from which she fears to be torn. Down, down!—“Mother o’ God, will she never stop?” exclaimed Curran; but a deluge of water poured through a slit in the hatch—“Jones, you omadhoun—Jones, you scallawag, the curse of Crom’ll on you! why didn’t you draw that hatch?” yelled half a dozen others.

She hung for a time in the balance, and then—at such times a few seconds is a long time—up she came and threw everybody the other way. Jones jumped on deck again. Instantly he broke into a roar, and the others crowded after him. They had to laugh, too, for there was Eddie spread

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across the mainboom, where he had been washed by the sea. Standing on deck the boom must have been more than a foot above his head, which meant that it must have been a good able sea to cast him there.

Eddie was hauled down and stood on his feet. "And a blessed lucky thing you had a good stout life-line around you, Eddie, boy," commented one of the rescuers.

"That's all right—no harm done—but who were the crazy fools who hollered out, 'Hang on, Eddie—hang on!' What did y' think?—I was going to jump overboard? 'Hang on!'—W-ugh! I'll be coughin' up salt for a week. Where's the skipper—gone below? Then blast this carryin' sail, I say! That barkeeper was right when he told me to stay ashore this trip. Lord, I'll bet there warn't a foot of her wind'ard rail out of water when she rolled down."

When Eddie came off watch he reported it thicker than ever above, so thick a man couldn't see the length of the vessel ahead. "And I'm thinkin', Skipper, we ought to be gettin' handy to Cape Cod."

"Not yet awhile. But you're the third man to hint at that, and, Lord knows, I don't want the name of a reckless man; so, if it will ease ye any, you might tell the watch to heave her to and sound

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—but don't waste any time at it. But I'll tell you, afore you go, you'll find no bottom."

When they came down and reported no bottom, the skipper only said, "Bide by me and I'll tell ye when it'll be time to sound." This he did when, three quarters of an hour later, he hailed out: "Now let ye heave the lead and ye'll get forty-one fathom and gray sand, and ye'll find Cape Cod Light, if it's clear—which it isn't, ye tell me—'ll be bearing three miles south by west."

They found the predicted depth and bottom, but no sight of the light, it was so thick. "And what'll we do now, Skipper—keep her goin' as she is?"

"How's the compass actin'?"

"Still jumpin'—just like the weather-vane atop of a fire-engine house on a squally day."

"That so?" He left his bunk, stuck his head out of the companionway, took a sniff, then another, and then said; "'T is sou' sou'west—this breeze. Keep it fair abeam as you can and let her go—that'll be west nor'west—and at five o'clock, and ye don't check her, and nothing gets in her way, she'll poke the end of her bowsprit through Minot's Light."

Below he came, then, with a fresh light in his eyes. "Cape Cod, eh? Getting near, getting near"—and he began to hum lively little jigs to

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himself, particularly those wherein, to interpret them properly, you want to take a little boy on your knee and jog him merrily up and down. Up on deck, about that time, the wind was of such force that the men on watch were unable to face it, and "Will he ease her, d'y' think, if we speak to him?" one was asking of another.

"Ease her? Him? Didn't y' see him, and hear him, when you came up?"

"How many miles to Dublin town?"

'Threescore and ten, sir.'

'Will I be there by candlelight?'

'Yes, and back again, sir.'

"Will he ease her? He'll welt hell out of her now—that's what he'll do. He's in the humor to give the first stranger he meets his bank book, or the shirt off his back to his worst enemy; but take a square inch of canvas off her—he wouldn't do it for his hope of heaven."

Coming across the bay, and it yet blowing so hard that the men on watch couldn't bear to look to windward—just the drops of water blowing off the tops of the seas cut their eyeballs, and it was so thick that the man at the wheel could not see his mate between the dories. Still the word was, "Keep her goin'!" The watch, peering into the wild gloom, only prayed that nothing would get in her way.

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Nothing did get in the way. The number of Minot's Ledge flashed out almost to the tick of 5.30, just as the wonderful little man had predicted, which the crew took as a matter of course. Could it come any other way? They followed their wonderful skipper on deck to prepare for the short cuts up the harbor.

"Will I be there by candlelight?"—he was in rare humor as he shot for the Narrows, that Christmas Eve. No lonesome Christmas dinner on Georges, this trip! No, sir. But they were not home yet. Just entering the Narrows they were, when the wind jumped, as quickly as a man may twirl his thumb, to northwest—dead in their teeth. The skipper swore softly to himself. A northwest gale, and of hurricane strength! Well, they had to meet it, and he went forward to pick a road for her in the dark.

Lying flat out on the knightheads he gave his orders to the bunch of men in the waist, who in turn passed them on to the wheel, where now were two men. "Hard a-lee!"—across the shriek of a gale so loud that the gang in the waist had to roar in unison to make it carry to where the helmsmen were tugging to keep her from running amuck.

The harbor was crowded with outward-bound craft, held up by the gale. The sight of them,

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cold-bloodedly preparing to go to sea the day before Christmas, provoked some of the crew to expressions of the deepest disgust. "The heathens! they'll make their money if they have to crucify Christ over again."

"But they have their schedules to make."

"Well, who makes the schedules that makes vessels sail the day before Christmas?—who but men who care more for a dollar than a hundred Christmas days?"

"Hard-a-lee!" roared the skipper, and across she shot till her bowsprit was all but into the dark side of some kind of craft at anchor—and again, "Hard-a-lee!"—and yet again, just as all began to think she was going to pile up on the rocks on the other side of the channel. "Hard-a-lee!"—now for a big collier—"Hard-a-lee!"—now an ocean liner—"Hard-a-lee!"—a tramp with swinging stern, so close that men on her deck hailed out profane protests. "Oh, wait till you're hit," hurled back the *Maggie's* crew, as round she came, and off on the other tack she shot. "Hard-a-lee! Hard-a-lee!"—the skipper flat out on the knightheads, the gang in the waist, and the two straining men at the wheel, and the *Maggie* shooting from one side to the other of the narrow channel in the blackness of the night.

She was through the worst of it at last, and no

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sooner through than the squalls ceased, the wind let down, and the stars came out. "Now, wouldn't that kill you?" exploded the gang. "When you've won out, everything comes your way!"

Through the inner harbor she tacked—the inner harbor that was ever crowded; but 't was a chance for a vessel that could sail and was handled right, and both were true of the *Maggie*, now well loosened after her passage. She was yet awaking some little discussions, as she picked her way through the inner harbor. Again and again she seemed about to board some craft on the road; but always, before it was too late, she slid by or went off on her heel. The more wrathful the ejaculations, the sweeter the skipper smiled. With every word he was nearing home, and, besides, he was at the wheel himself, now, and the kind of enjoyment that little boys get out of sailing toy yachts across frog ponds was his in sailing the *Maggie* through the overcrowded harbor.

He brought her to the dock himself, not lowering a sail until he was almost into the slip, nor letting go the wheel until he had given the last shoot that sent her all but up Atlantic avenue, that would have sent the end of her bowsprit through the rear of an oyster-dealer's shack at the head of the slip only for the active men that leaped flying aboard

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the nearest of the docked vessels and checked her speed with quick-hitched lines. It was the kind of performance not often seen in these days of cheap tows, and nobody to see it then but the watchman. And he, when he had verified the vessel, took no further note of it beyond, "Coleman down to a trys'l!"—and casually, a moment later, to Peter Kane—"Must 've been blowin' some outside!"

"So it was; but no trys'l," indignantly returned Peter, "only we busted our mains'l."

After she was docked, Coleman only stopped long enough on the *Maggie* to make an examination of Nielsen, who had convinced himself during the day that some ribs had been broken the time he was thrown from his bunk and laid across the stove. "Look, Skipper, she's all black and blue,"—and he showed his bared side in proof. So he was, poor man! but not too much sympathy did the little man give him. "Just bein' black and blue don't mean they're broken. Man, I've been that way forty times. Put on your shirt and go home and stuff your grandchildren's stockin's."

"Gran'children, Skipper. Why, I haf no gran'-children—not efen children."

"You poor, unfortunate creature! And what matter how your ribs are, then? Lock the cabin when you leave," answered Coleman, and he hurried onto the dock.

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Up on the street he boarded the first south-bound red trolley car he found, and, knowing he had a half-hour's ride before him, dropped into a corner seat and tried to act the patient man. But the snow lay on the ground, and riding was slow work, and, absent-mindedly, he took his pipe from his coat pocket. Only when the conductor fixed on him a glittering eye did he bethink himself and put it back. The car turned one corner, turned another corner, made a long straight run of it, and was about to shoot around a third corner, when a wagon butted in on the track, and, the rails being slippery under the fresh snow, there was a collision. It was not a violent shock—no more than to throw most of the passengers from their seats. Coleman held his—it seemed as natural as a heaving deck, but the old lady across the way bounced into his lap. Coleman set her back on the cushions. "My soul!" she piped, "who'd ever think you was so strong. But ain't it dangerous travelling on these 'lectric cars!"

"Terr'ble dangerous, ma'am," agreed Coleman, and, that being his corner, he got up to get off.

"I can't say I blame you, nowise," called the old lady as he went out the door—"the dangers of travelling, these times!"

Coleman took himself to a toy store on a broad,

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lighted street. He'd had the place in his eye for weeks. The girl behind the counter seemed rather to like his looks. "Something for the children?" she insinuated. "Wheelbarrows, letter blocks, gas balls, skates, sled——"

"A train of cars, first—a fine long train with smoke all ready to come out the ingine, if you have 'em that way."

"Well, not quite that way, but here's one can be made to imitate steam."

"That the best?"

"Well, here's one a little more expensive."

"The best, is it?"

"The best we've got in stock"—she looked doubtfully at the unshaven little man—"is sixteen dollars."

"That's what I want, and give me a wheelbarrow, and a sled, and a gas balloon—a blue one—a pair of skates—a little boy's size—four years old but big as a boy of six. I dunno could he learn to skate at his age, but the little devil he'll try. And a football." He surveyed the shelves. "Have ye any little boats? That? M-m—I don't believe much in a sloop rig, myself, but maybe Dannie 'll like it, and that one won't be too big for a bath tub—if he don't drive her too hard. I had a fine little boat all but whittled for him, comin' home, but it got so wet—fine soft pine it was, too—

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that it wouldn't cut anny more—a bit wet, d' y' see?"

"In a ship? I see—the water splashed up?"

"That's it—and wet me toes"—the sly smile of Coleman!

"Too bad!" To herself she said, "Such a simple man!" and to Coleman, "Here's your change, sir: twenty-three forty, out of twenty-five—one sixty."

Coleman pushed it back, and in her ear whispered, "Buy things, dear—candy animals, elephants, camels, giraffes—for your little brothers to home. How'd I know you had little brothers? Sure a girl with your face has always little brothers"—and he was out the door with his bundles.

Coleman bought some candy himself—four or five bags of it—and a few other odds and ends he hadn't thought of in the toy store. Then it was a straight course, for home. "Glory be, no shoals to bother!" Two tacks and he was there, standing on the sidewalk and gazing at the lighted windows. He could not see within, because of the drawn blinds, but he could see the shadows—slim and stout shadows, tall and little people's.

"That's Maggie, and—oo-rah!—little Dannie,"

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and, with a hand to the bell—"but, no, the back door 'll be open, to-night; I'll steal in," and around he went by the side alley.

He crept up the back stairs, across the porch, and through the outer door. The inner door was closed, but unbolted. Through that, softly, and across the kitchen floor yet more softly came the voice that had mellowed thirty years of life for him.

"Maggie!" whispered Coleman.

Another spoke—a child's voice.

"Dannie!" and he halted no longer, but strode down the hall. In the large room they heard the steps and the jingling of the train of cars. "Who's that?" they called.

"Who's that, indeed? Who would it be?"

"Arrah, Colie!—Colie, darlin'!"

"Maggie!—Maggie!——"

"Grand'pa!—gran'pa!"

"Oo-rah, Dannie!—O my little Dannie!" The unheeded packages clattered to the floor.

One arm went to his wife's neck and one arm around the little boy, lifting him off his feet. They bore him down at last and he took a chair. He looked around. "And how are you all? What's it, Maggie? Was it rough, did ye ask? Divil a rough!—smooth as butter, the whole fortnight, and the finest and fairest breeze, comin' home.

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Did we catch lots of fish, is it, Dannie? Well, I've caught bigger trips in my time, Dannie—but we caught enough. Jump you up? 'Deed, and I will——

“ ‘How many miles to Dublin town?’

‘Threescore and ten, sir.’

‘Will I get there by candlelight?’

‘Yes, and back again, sir.’

“ ‘Jump, jump, jump again,—

Jump, jump again, sir!’

“And I must look at the Christmas tree? 'Deed, and I will, and all the fine presents with it.”

Down on the floor he sat and examined everything. He helped decorate the tree, and scorched his fingers and hopped around and said 'twas awful—the danger men run ashore, what with Christmas trees and lighted candles. “But you're not afraid, Dannie—are you, boy? 'Deed, you're not. Put out your chest, now, till I see how much you've grown since I left. Oh, the big boy he's gettin' to be!”

Two hours of rapture passed before Maggie saw the sure signs. “And now, lad, to bed, your mother says. O yes, boy; good little boys goes to bed when their grandmother says so. And you're the good little boy now, Dannie? 'Deed, and you are. And some day 't is the fine big man you'll grow to be if you're a good boy now. And scared

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of nobody? No, indeed. And fight all the bad peoples? Indeed, and you will that same—and bate the heads off them, Dannie, boy. And now, lad—glory be, but he's asleep already, the little man!”

Coleman bent his head to catch the light breathing. He never listened to it but his throat tightened. “God keep you, Dannie!”—and he touched softly the little curls, patted the little hand outside the coverlet, and tiptoed away. Then, drawing his chair beside Maggie's, he took out his pipe and lit it, stretched his feet toward the stove, and smoked blissfully. So they sat side by side, and neither of them spoke for a long time.

It was Maggie who broke the silence, at last. “And you hurried home, Colie?”

“Oh, I jogged her a bit.”

“But Dan got in at five o'clock, three hours before you.”

“And left ten hours ahead, and didn't have to beat up the channel.”

“No?”

“Yes. That foolish man, Peter Kane, had to go astray.”

“Small wonder!—he never had too much sense. Then you drove her, Colie?”

Coleman smiled after the smoke he blew to the ceiling. “A little, dear.”

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“For me, Colie—for an old woman like——”

“Old, is it? And how old, now? Fifty-two? Arrah, no! On my soul, Maggie, but if you didn’t say it yourself, or if it weren’t in little Dannie to prove it, it isn’t fifty-two, nor forty-two, either, that I’d be sayin’. With the cheeks of you that rosy and the two blue eyes of you and the soft little bud-rose of a mouth—why, Maggie Shea, if I was a stranger lookin’ in the frosted window, now, ’tis thirty-two I’d say.”

When Coleman smiled like that, the light of the battling sea giving way to the mounting tenderness, why, no mere Adonis had ever a shadow of his charm—Maggie fell into his arms.

“But the temper of me, Colie, dear—’tis a sore trial to me, that same temper.”

“Temper, Maggie? Sure, and I’d not like you half so well without that same. ’T is just the sign of the fire in you, dear.’”

“But my temper hurried you off, that morning?”

“Divil a hurry of me for anything ever you said, you foolish woman!”

“And if Dan hadn’t spoken you, would you have come home?—would you, now?”

“Come home, is it? Come home for Christmas Eve? For that”—and he pointed to the tree—“for that, and the little child in his little bed—and”—as his hand sought hers—“for you, ma-

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vourneen? Why, Maggie, the sun will never rise on the day when I wouldn't——"

"Wouldn't what, Colie?"

"What! Ah-h Maggie, but if I had the words to tell you! But, Maggie asthore, if you want to know how good it is to be home when people—when people you care for—are waitin' for you, then you need to be worryin' a little on the way, wonderin' will the wind hold for you to be home in time or no. But glory be, it held this time, and 't was pure j'y, pure j'y, that passage!"

THE DRAWN SHUTTERS

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NO sooner had the *Midnight* let go her anchor in the cove than a door opened in the topmost little house on the rocks. Carefully an old man came down to the beach, with some difficulty launched his boat, and presently was alongside.

The skipper himself took the old man's painter. "Come aboard, Mister Kippen," he said heartily.

"Thankee, Captain, but not this mornin'." He hesitated perceptibly ere he put the question. "No word, Captain?" There was more of inquiry in the old man's eyes than in what came from his faltering lips—worn old eyes, in which was a pitiable plea for hope. "No word yet o' the *Pallas*, Captain Butler?"

"None yet, Mister Kippen."

"Wh-h-h——" the sigh shook the old body. "Such a fine, able vessel as she was, too. My boy thought he was made when he got her, Captain."

"And well he might, Mister Kippen."

"And the proud man I was when I saw him sail out o' Carouge Cove that day. I followed him across the bay to old Weebald, you mind, in my

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little jack, Captain, though 'twas a risin' gale and I had to lay to Lark Harbor for two days after afore it moderated so I could put back. But the grand American schooners, they'll make easy work of this, I says, and warn't I proud to think of him sailin' that able American vessel! The first Bay of Islands boy that ever went master of a Gloucesterm'n. They'll few o' 'em show *him* the course to Gloucester, I says. Aye, I did. And—" again the eyes dulled—"and no word o' him since, you say, Captain? Sure there's no word?"

"Well, not when we left home, Mister Kippen, though we didn't come straight from Gloucester. We stopped at St. Pierre on the way. Maybe Murray, who's just come to anchor below, has some word. He left home two days after we did."

"Did he, now? Two days? Yes, yes. I'll drop below and see him. Thankee, Captain, but not this mornin'. Ay, I could one time, and dance as I drinked, but my bitters be'n't what they were to me. No, my bitters don't taste right now; but thankee, Captain, for all that."

The old man reseated himself in his little boat, resumed his oars, and was off. Captain Butler watched him until he had reached the side of Murray's vessel.

"There, he's aboard. He'll ask the same

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question, and Murray'll give him the same answer. Nobody with the heart to tell him the truth."

"And what *is* the truth, Captain?"

"The truth? The whole story? Well, you must go back some little way for that—back to six weeks yesterday, when three of us were on this very spot ready to leave for Gloucester—Wesley Marrs in the *Lucy Foster*, old Kippen's son in the *Pallas*, and myself in this one. We were all of one tonnage, and there was rivalry between us to see who'd take the biggest load of herring. Each of us 'd took on two thousand barrels salt herring, and I know I thought that for our tonnage we all had enough. Well, that night the three of us met at a dance, and after the dance there was supper and a few drinks of smuggled stuff. There was more or less talking too, you know, before the girls, and somebody remarked how deep the vessels were loaded—too deep for that time of the year. We were, as a matter of fact, pretty deep; but Wesley said: 'Deep hell! the *Lucy* could take another two hundred and fifty barrels and not know she had 'em.'

"Well, you know there are people in the world who are made of meanness and envy. There was a fellow there who was quite a little man when the American skippers weren't around. He'd been

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in the rear row for some time, but now he comes to the front again. He looks across at Wesley. 'That's good talk, Captain. Could—you say you could, but *would* you?'

"'Would? Yes, and *will*,' fires back Wesley. 'Have you two hundred and fifty barrels handy?'

"'I will have 'em alongside in the morning.'

"'Then in the afternoon they'll be aboard,' says Wesley.

"'I'll have 'em there. That's certainly something *like* a load of herring,' goes on this chap. 'I wonder now if any of our people here would—' and looks over to young Kippen.

"'What's that,' asks Kippen, 'about carryin' a load of herrin'?''

"The fellow repeated what he'd said, and Kippen flares right up. Bring him another two hundred and fifty barrels and see what he'd do with them! You see, he had double reasons for it. There was the girl that he was trying to work to windward of, and making good weather of it, too, naturally—a husky, good-looking young skipper—and this the night before he was to leave on what was generally reckoned a hard trip to Gloucester at this time of year. And then, too, he was the first man out of this place ever went master of a first-class American fisherman. And the natives hereabout were that proud of him! 'H-m!' they'd

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say, 'and so they has to come here to wild New-f'undland for skippers as well as men?' and could hardly keep from shouting, some of 'em, at our fellows as they went by. And maybe 'twas from knowing something of that spirit that Wesley Marrs was so quick to make his boast.

"Anyway, whatever Wesley Marrs says drunk he'll make good sober. So when our friend was there with any quantity of salt herring next morning, Wesley took his two hundred and fifty barrels. And you may be sure the *Lucy* did set something scandalous in the water when she'd got 'em on deck—a good plank deeper than any vessel leaving Bay of Islands that month.

"'I misdoubt you'll ever get her home, Captain Marrs, if you meets heavy weather,' was the cheerful word of one native.

"'No?' says Wesley. 'No? Well, we'll see,' and goes around with an auger plugging up her regular scuppers and boring new ones under the top rail. The natives couldn't keep their admiration to themselves when they saw that.

"Simon Kippen, the old man's son, listened to that talk for a while, and then for the honor of the Bay of Islands—and the thought of the girl, too, I guess—he said he'd stand by what he said the night before. 'What one man could do another man could do,' and also went around plugging up

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the regular scuppers and boring holes under his top rail.

“Tried to stop him, did Wesley. ‘Now you don’t need to do that, Sim,’ he says, ‘just because you had a glass of liquor in you last night.’

“‘Why not, as well as you?’ says Sim, stung you see. ‘Why can’t a Newf’undlander do what any American-born can do?’

“‘Why, no reason at all why he can’t, gen’rally speaking, if he’s got the right stuff in him, which I know you have; but I’ll tell you why, and no discredit to you, Sim, that in this partic’lar case you can’t. It’s true I’m no older than you but I’ve been handling big fishermen ten times as long. I’ve been carrying sail since I was a boy ’most. I know what a vessel c’n do. I know what no man learns except by hard experience, and then he’s lucky if he lives to brag about it afterward. I know just how far a vessel c’n roll down before she rolls down to stay. And partic’larly do I know what the *Lucy* c’n do. You don’t learn that in one year, or two years, or five years of driving. And you’re damn lucky if, after you’ve learned it, you don’t get lost yourself—yourself and your vessel and all hands—some day, experimenting further. And more than that, Sim,’ says Wesley. ‘I’ve been making passages from here to Gloucester for eight or ten winters now. I

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know every foot of the road, and no credit to me, while this is your first passage as master.'

"‘Maybe so,’ says Simon Kippen to that; ‘but I’ve been hand for many a passage—as many as you, for that matter.’

"‘Maybe you have,’ says Wesley; and through it all he was good-tempered as could be. I mind how he looked, standing with one foot on the quarter-rail and smiling, though we all knew it might be no smiling matter soon. ‘Maybe you have, Sim,’ says he, smiling over at young Kippen, ‘but when you’re master and the whole responsibility on you alone, you get to thinking a little deeper. So if you take my advice, and no harm meant, you won’t take aboard that deck-load of herring.’

"‘You put ashore your deck-load and I won’t take mine aboard,’ says Sim.

"‘No,’ says Wesley. ‘I’ve shipped mine—it is in the papers now—and what I’ve shipped I’ll take home or wash overboard—or,’ he added after a little pause, ‘go down with.’

"‘Well, maybe I’ll go down with mine, too.’

"‘Maybe you will, too,’ says Wesley; ‘but what good will that do?’

"‘So they put out. I warn’t quite ready to sail—had to reeve a new main-sheet—and I remember I cast off—we were all three tied together—first Kippen’s line, and then Wesley’s.

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“‘Good-by!’ calls out Sim to me.

“‘Fair wind,’ I answered.

“‘I’ll see you in Gloucester,’ was Wesley’s word—‘that’s if all goes well,’ he added. Wesley was always like that, adding little last words after a little study. He’d lived too long on the sea, I s’pose, to make the mistake of ever saying he’d surely do this or cert’nly do that. But Sim warn’t that way. He was drunk with the pride of sailing the *Pallas* out of the Bay of Islands, where all his old chums could see him, and his father, too—to say nothing of the girl he was in love with. To the dock she’d come to see him off. And there he kissed her and hopped aboard the *Pallas*. ‘Good-by, dad,’ he hollered back to the old man. ‘I’ll be back in a month, and maybe be in Gloucester in three or four days; certainly in a week with anything like a fair chance. Maybe somebody’ll be showing you a Gloucester paper with an account of the trip in it before I get back.’

“They sailed out, and I followed next day. And, of course, what further happened to them I didn’t learn till afterward. But they had it out from the beginning. They were no sooner clear of the bay, hardly into the gulf, with Kippen maybe a mile or two in the lead, than they drove into a westerly gale. And all the way down this tough west coast to Cabot’s Strait they had it. Both of

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'em had on more sail than they should, more than was any mortal use to 'em; but after two days and two nights together, sometimes so close they could hail each other, they warn't either of 'em taking any of it in. Kippen ought to have, because—I meant to have said before—the *Pallas*, while as fine and able-looking a vessel as almost any man would want to see, was what's called a crooked vessel. Her deck wasn't flat enough, and she was too low in the waist—the kind that would fill up amidship and sometimes not get rid of it in time, while the *Lucy's* flat as a ball-room floor. That was the biggest reason why we didn't want to see Sim load too deep. But you couldn't tell Kippen there was any fault with the *Pallas*—he'd eat you alive.

“Well, Kippen held on, the gulf behind them, till they butted into the Atlantic and into that hard south-easter, the hardest gale in maybe two winters. I met it two days later, and though I warn't loaded near so deep as Wesley and Kippen, I was glad enough to put into Sydney for a harbor. And I warn't carrying any whole mains'l, either. So you can imagine what weather they made of it. Loaded deep with salt herring a vessel might's well be fastened with a long rod to the bottom of the ocean. There's no lift or heave to her. The sea breaking over her gives her no chance at all.

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Well, the bother in a case like that—a logey cargo, a big sea, a gale of wind, and a press of canvas—is that you're most sure to get caught sooner or later and hove down; and a vessel hove down with an overload of salt herring is in a bad way. Gen'rally she don't leave you long in doubt. That's what must have happened to the *Pallas* with her crooked deck. Up to five o'clock that particular afternoon, after twenty-four hours in the southeaster, those on the *Lucy Foster* could easily make out the *Pallas* astern. She'd hung on well up to that time—Wesley didn't pass her till they were clear of the Newf'undland coast; but now coming on dark this day the *Pallas* began to drop back, and soon after, when she'd put up her lights, they could hardly be seen from the *Lucy*. Now all this time they'd been having desp'rate times aboard the *Lucy*. There was forty times they thought she was going, but somehow or other, just like her, she'd come up just in time. Then the deck-load of two hundred and fifty barrels began to loosen up under the battering. Now it would have been a great blessing all around if the deck-load had gone—to all but the owners, that is, and even they'd rather lose the deck-load than the vessel and the two thousand barrels in the hold, not to speak of the crew. But Wesley wouldn't let 'em go. 'No,' he says, 'I'll get 'em home. Nobody'll



"The deck-load began to loosen up."

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have it to say in Gloucester we got scared so soon. I know Kippen. He'll try and hang on to *his* deck-load long's he can.' And with lines about them Wesley and his gang went into the swash and put extra lashings to the barrels on deck. By the time they got that job done 'twas good and dark, and they could barely see the staggering red light of the *Pallas* astern. After that they had no time for anybody but themselves. The worst of it was on them then. And it was well Wesley did get his deck-load double-griped. But tough as it was on the *Lucy* it must have been tougher still on the vessel that was lurching along behind them. And thinking of that, after two terrible seas had all but finished the *Lucy*, Wesley looked back for the lights of the *Pallas* again.

"Wesley looked long to where he had seen the red light before. He brushed the spray from his eyes and looked again. No light could he see. He sent men into the rigging—he was lashed to the wheel himself—and they looked back over the water. No light anywhere—nothing but what looked like a patch of foam.

"And though he dreaded it, Wesley hove to his vessel. 'Suppose she isn't gone, and suppose she's not hove to and he keeps her goin', he'll cert'nly have the laugh on Wesley Marrs, but what

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of that? We may not be a bit of use, but we'll wait here till morning.'

"Which they did. But no *Pallas*, not even a bit of wreckage. Like a rock she must have gone down, as a vessel loaded like that and caught wrong is bound to. Anyway, Wesley was satisfied she was gone, and next day went on his way, and after another ten days of head winds battled into Gloucester.

"Is she gone? Of course we all know she's gone. Six weeks ago that was. Her list was published in the Gloucester papers just before we left, but nobody here will tell that to old Kippen. He still thinks she was blown out to sea or maybe clear back into the Gulf of St. Lawrence, where she is now drifting around dismantled and unable to help herself, but still afloat and the boy that left here six weeks back still walking her battered hulk."

The master of the *Midnight* glanced down toward Murray's vessel. From there his eyes roved toward the little old house perched high up on the rocks, and back then to Murray's vessel, where now old Kippen could be seen shoving off his boat. The old man made but feeble progress, and the tide set him over toward the *Midnight*. Clearly he was very tired, but when he called out to Captain Butler there was a more hopeful ring to his words:

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"Captain Murray says 'tis possible the *Pallas* was drove clear back through the gulf to the Labrador coast, drove ashore like, and they might be there now, he says. Hard livin' on that coast, Captain, in winter."

"It must be."

"Aye, but they has their herrin', and what fresh fish they can ketch. Simon will make out."

"I hope so, Mister Kippen."

The old man rowed on to the beach, where, after drawing his boat above high-tide mark, he laboriously made the ascent of the rocks. Now they could see him, and again he would disappear beyond some intervening shack in the winding path. Neighbors were evidently hailing him on the way, for here and there he would halt and, half turning, nod his head, say a few words, of further hope doubtless, and pass along. Twice he paused, apparently for breath.

Arrived at his house he did not at once enter, but turned and gazed out over the bay. He stood so until the door opened and his old wife appeared; and together they stood on the flat rock that served for a doorstep and gazed over the water. It gave one a shiver to see their old gray heads bared to the cold winter air.

Not until the old woman clutched him by the arm did he turn his face from the sea, and even

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then he returned to it, sweeping his thin arm toward the north-west with hopeful emphasis. She bent her head to his ear then, and evidently asked a disturbing question, for he dropped his arm and shook his head, whereat, stepping heavily, she went within the door. The old man lingered for one more long look across the bay and out toward the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Then he, too, went within.

The master of the *Midnight* sighed heavily. "Isn't that tough? The old woman hasn't his faith, you see. But he'll go on hoping and praying, and none of us with courage to tell him. Maybe 'twould 've been better to tell him."

As he spoke a neighbor was seen to stop at the door of the house on the hill and knock. The old man came to the door. The neighbor handed him a newspaper and was about to make off, but the old man called after him. The neighbor opened up the paper, pointed hurriedly to something in it and rushed away. The old man gazed after him and then at the paper, before he closed the door. "He can't read," commented the master of the *Midnight*, "but his wife can. God! she'll get it first and have to tell him—what we might have told him before!"

In perhaps an hour the door of the little shack reopened. It was the old woman who came out.

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With some effort, for the wind was high, she closed all the shutters, and without further look around, stepped within the door again.

Presently another woman, a younger woman this, was seen to climb the winding path and stop at the door. The master of the *Midnight* unconsciously bent over the rail. "See now—the poor girl!"

After some hesitation the young woman knocked. Again she knocked. And yet once more. No answer coming, she rapped on one of the closed shutters, and still receiving no response, stood on her toes in an effort to peek through the diamond opening. She was not tall enough for that, and, stepping back, again she essayed the door. She rattled the latch; but no word.

Throwing back her head, she stared anew at the blank walls; but nothing coming of that, she made a despairing gesture with her hands, resettled her shawl about her shoulders, and came away. Neighbors, from behind jarred doors, peered out on her, but none spoke to her; and so still was it that from the deck of the *Midnight* they could hear her heels clicking as she hurried down the rocky pathway.

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I

UP to Oliver Shepherd's Sam Leary was shining like a great light. He looked now about the room. "All good friends of yours here, Oliver? Well, here's how it was. I'd been havin' a hell of a good time, Oliver, this night at your old friend Antone's in Sain' Peer. Yes, he's still runnin' the Caffay Lomprer—and he'd been acting like a gen'leman clear up to the last, which every caffay-keeper, you know, don't after a man's money's gone. And goin' away owin' for a few rounds of drinks I was telling Antone how I'd settle with him when I got to Sain' Peer again, when 'Tuh, tuh,' says he. 'Tuh, tuh, mong amee—tuh, tuh, mong amee doo coor, my ver' dear fren.' What mattairs two, t'ree dollairs among o'l fren's?' And we had another drink, and Antone goes on, 'Sam-mee, I have long time in min' to ask you one favor.' 'Command me, my bong Antone,' says I, and he rolls out two little barrels of rum and asks me would I take them over to Bay of Islands for him, and of course I said I would.

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“Well, the skipper ketches me and Gillis as we were hoistin’ ’em aboard the vessel. ‘Didn’t I tell you, Sam, I wanted no contraband stuff on this vessel?’ says he.

“‘Sure you did, Skipper, but they’re for Oliver Shepherd, Skipper, over to Bay of Islands—a good fellow, Skipper.’

“‘Yes, I know,’ says he; ‘but will Oliver pay the fine if we’re caught tryin’ to smuggle the stuff in?’

“‘Oh, you leave it to me, Skipper, and there won’t be any fine to pay,’ I says, and there warn’t, though somebody must ’ve tipped the cutter people off, for we’d no sooner dropped our anchor here than she sent a boat to overhaul us. And she’d have got the stuff, too, only just as her people came over one rail Gillis and me dropped over the other rail in the dory, and in the dark we rowed ashore, and you right there to take it from us, Oliver. But now let’s have a little touch o’ that same rum,” and from a decorated barber’s bottle marked ‘Hair-Oil,’ produced from the pocket of his ulster, he proceeded to mix hot punches, making clear meanwhile what beauty and simplicity were in the operation.

“Aye, Oliver, a child could mix it. A little of the good stuff, so, and some hot water—not too much, though—so. And then a little sugar—not too much either—and a touch of lemon if there’s

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one handy, and if not, no matter—a taste more o' the rum instead—and there y' are, a drink that wouldn't jar one o' the wise virgins, and yet a drink a man'd row a dory seven mile through a snow-storm to get a sniff of any day, let be a fine big tumblerful like this. That's what, Oliver. And have another while your throat's warm and the pores are open. 'Tis most soothin' when the delicate membrane's relaxed, I've heard the doctors say. But ain't that somebody to the door? If it is, in God's name, let him in. To keep a man outside in the cold t' night, when there's somethin' to thaw him out inside, it's a crime again' humanity."

Shepherd admitted a stranger. "Sammie, this be Mister Stapkins, of Saint Johns."

"Glad to make your acquaintance, Captain Leary."

"Captain, eh? A promotion, but no matter—men that tend to business same's I do ought to get promoted. I'm off that Gloucesterm'n out in the stream."

"The *Arbiter*? I was noticing her yesterday evening coming in—a fine, able vessel. And came to anchor rather smartly."

"Why shouldn't she? A smart crew. And if Gillis was here now—him I'm training in the way he should go—and that other peaceable, delightful

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citizen, his new-found chum, Ollie Fowler, Mister Shepherd's nephew here—they don't either of 'em care any more for a drink o' rum than they do for a man's life, and—now, isn't that the everlasting way of it? Talk of angels, you know. Here, you image of Cupid, you two-winged messenger o' love—you gay Don Jon o' the Bay of Islands."

"Who's calling me names, hah?" Young Gillis stood in the door.

"Who? Why, me! You tongue-twisted cast-away—me!"

"Oh, you, Sam Leary? Well, you can, but nobody else. You're all right, Sammie. I thought maybe it was—" He picked out one after the other of the pairs of eyes around the room, till he met those of the stranger. "And who's this? Who're you? What name—Stapkins? Of Saint Johns? And buyin' herrin', of course? You must be new in the business for certain—I never heard mention o' you before. But let's have a drink. Hah, Sammie, a drink on me?"

"No, Gillie, but on me. I'm buying all the drinks to-night. I've got some stuff here—look, the good old rum of Sain' Peer." Leary drew another decorated bottle from his ulster, and held it up for the company's inspection. "There was a barber in Sain' Peer. 'Shave-O!' says I. 'Wee, wee, shave-oo,' says he, and I drops off

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for a nap in the chair. When I woke up I had a hair-cut, and he wanted to charge me fifty cents. So coming away I took those bottles."

"You have an easy conscience, Captain Leary."

"No easier than the barber's, Mister Stapkins. And no sin to recover stolen goods."

"Stolen?"

"Sure he did. Where'd he get hold o' bottles with United States words on 'em, if he didn't steal 'em? From off some steamer put in there, most likely. H'm. Hair-oil? But there's no hair-oil in 'em now. I fumigated 'em. But the stuff in 'em now 'd grow hair on a college professor—yes, even if 'twas professor of—what's it now?—cuts up the bodies of little creatures and gets at the souls of men thereby? By-ol-ogy, yes."

"Huh, here's one, too. And for all the duty it paid!" Gillis also produced and slammed a bottle on the table. "The red rum of S'Peer, too. Have a drink everybody. Mister Stap—Stap—what's it?—never mind, have a drink."

"I never drink, Mister Gillis—doctor's orders."

"H-m—a queer reason that. If we all did everything the doctor tells us, it would be queer livin', wouldn't it, Sammie."

"Aye, 'twould be like head-winds all the time, Gillie."

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"And a man 'd find it slow goin' not to let her run before it once in a while, hah, Sammie?"

"He cert'nly would, though there's fun in beating to wind'ard, too. But where you off for?"

"Oh, just down the beach aways, me and Ollie Fowler."

"H-m—goin' girlin', hah? The poor slobs o' girls that gets either o' you— Well, jog along."

Leary gazed after his departing shipmate. "There's cert'nly been a lot of liquor turned loose in this place lately. But you're not goin' too, Mister Stapkins?"

"Yes, I've got to write some letters home."

"Well, that's right. I s'pose we all ought to be writing letters home, too, but if I did they'd be some surprised in Gloucester when they got any from me. Good-night to you, sir."

The stranger passed out. Leary closed the door after him.

"Not what you'd call a magnetic creature that, is he? But I s'pose he has his uses. A peaceable sort, anyway, with not too much to say, and I s'pose that's a good point when men like me stand 'round ready to do all the talking. But his goin' needn't bother the rest of us. Here y' are, Oliver, another little touch for you. And for you that's got to keep the fiddle busy—got to keep you well oiled. That's the boy—never in all your life did

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you renege. Slide it down—it'll never go a dustier road, I'll bet. But where's the dance we were goin' to have? Where's your daughters, Oliver? In the other room waitin'? Man, you don't say? Call 'em in. Ah, there you are. Hello, Bess. Hello, Sue. Come on, now, all hands pair off while he's tuning up that fiddle. Don't be shy, you Black-eye—I'm talkin' to you. And you with the corn-hair, you know you're dyin' to dance. Pitch in all, that's the way. Drive her now! Drive her, boys—that's it. Hang tight now, Bess, an I'll swing you so you'll think your heels 'll never find the floor again."

II

GILLIS and Fowler were walking the beach this cold night, after a protracted siege of courting at Morton's, a notably dry household.

"Whew, but it's a cold night, Ollie!"

"Aye, Gillie. And on such a night a little somethin' warmin'—" and flapped his hands across his chest, and fervently wished he could get hold of a drink somewhere.

Curious the effect of mental suggestion. Both young men, sniffing, fancied they caught in the air a faint whiff of that which they just then most

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desired, the red rum of old Saint Pierre, and seemingly without any further wilful thought of their own found their feet taking them toward the ruin of an old barn on the road to Oliver Shepherd's house. What was the surprise of young Fowler to discover on examination that it was a barn purchased lately by his uncle, and of Gillis that it was the same barn wherein Leary and himself had hid the two kegs which had come off the *Arbiter*. Oddly enough, too, Oliver Shepherd had been on the spot to direct the storing of them. A fox, that same old Oliver, who hugged his rum altogether too close, considering that it never paid duty and cost him nothing to have it brought from Saint Pierre.

Gillis blew down his fingers: "A pity now a man don't get one lonesome drink from two whole ten-gallon kegs. A great pity."

But he would look further into the matter, which he did, with Oliver's aid, and found the door secured by the heaviest padlock he had ever seen on a door in all his life. They lit a match, several matches, to make sure.

"There was no such monstrous lock as that last night, Ollie?"

"As if we couldn't be trusted, Gillie! Might's well call us all thieves and be done with it."

The scent of the liquor was patent enough now.



“There was no such monstrous lock as that last night, Ollie?”

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It must still be there. Well they knew the brand, the good old rum of Saint Pierre, no less. And kegs of it in there, perhaps, and they dying of a thirst. And not themselves alone, but every young fellow in the bay. It must have been the thought of the multitude of longing ones which violently aroused their sense of hospitality. And why be selfish with it, anyway? If the old man was stingy with his liquor, no reason they should. Gillis put the question to Ollie, and Ollie offered generously to find a dozen good fellows who would be only too delighted to help them out.

It was from there on that the man known as Stapkins found it easy enough to hold the trail of young Oliver, who, walking not overfast and singing intermittently as he went, and failing not to knock up acquaintances to help them in his expedition, soon had quite a company: a gay, blithe young company, prepared for anything in the line of nocturnal adventure.

Oliver led them back to where Gillis was guarding the treasure. It mattered little now that the door was securely locked. With a half-dozen lads at their back, a stout timber, a good rush, a blow, and again a blow, how could the door resist? And who could hear, with the surf booming so loudly?

Surely nobody could hear? Surely not where

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should be most concern, at old man Shepherd's down the road, where blazed the late lights, and whence came roaring indications now of dancing and feasting. And soon the band came swaying down the beach again, each with his keg to a sagging shoulder, for the liquor brought by the *Arbiter* was not Oliver Shepherd's sole store; and when the burden seemed overheavy they halted to draw the bung and swallow a strengthening mouthful, and to remark how wonderfully the load lightened after each draught.

To track so careless a crew was not a difficult matter for the Government agent; nor did it require any strategic genius to capture one keg abandoned by its fatigued bearer, roll it to the edge of the beach and whistle to the alert cutter.

And so was inaugurated Sam Leary's real trouble. Not till next morning did he know aught of that midnight adventure. He and Gillis were dipping herring on to the *Arbiter's* deck. "O Lord," interjected Leary, "what a difference! A pity a man has to leave it, the dancing and the squeezing, the grip of the hand on your arm! A great girl that Bess Shepherd. Why didn't you come back and take it in, Gillie?"

Whereupon Gillis related the adventure of the rum, failing not to include all those details that his usually tolerant mate might enjoy it also. But

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Leary did not enjoy it. He even took Gillis to task.

"And you that glories in smuggling!" exclaimed the mortified Gillis.

"Man alive! Are you comparing stealing and smuggling. Smuggling's adventure. You're up against a powerful Gover'ment. The Gover'ment half expects it from us. You see, Gillie, men like us to sea most of the time are but little bother to any Gover'ment. They don't have to run expensive fire and police and——"

"I dunno 'bout the police, Sammie."

"Let me go on—police and banking systems for you and me. And no great harm if we pay off other ways to sort of bring up our average. Besides smuggling's a recognized institution. And you take a chance smugglin'. If you're caught you're slapped into jail, which makes legitimate adventure of it. But you were stealing—and from a friend—a friend of mine, anyway, and I'm a friend of yours. If you'd pounced on it accidentally, not knowin' who owned it, 'twould been no great harm—'twould been so temptin', and the Lord himself has to allow for natural impulses. But takin' stuff from a man's barn when he's not around to watch, and where you'd never known it was if he hadn't let you in himself—why that's not right, Gillis, not right, and no luck will

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come of it. And—now what in hell does that chap want?”

It was the cutter's boat approaching, and in the stern the commander himself.

“Captain Leary?” queried the cutter's commander.

“What? Captain again? But all right—yes, I'm Captain Leary.”

“You're in charge of this vessel—agent and so on?”

“Acting as agent, yes.”

“We thought so. You're wanted.”

“For what?”

“Smuggling.”

“Smuggling! Quit your fooling—it's too cold a mornin'.”

“Fooling! Fooling! With whom do you think you are dealing? I'm quite sure I'll put you through now. Some of you American fishermen act at times as if you thought we were some old water-boat. You in particular were well described. ‘Jovial,’ our agent said. After we get through with you I'll warrant you won't be so jovial,” and the revenue cutter's commander permitted himself to smile. “Come on, now. You can take counsel, if you wish,” and the commander smiled again.

“I'll be my own counsel, but I want a witness.

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Come on, Gillis," and whispered to him, "Stand by and put in a word at the right time."

The appearance of Stapkins in the cabin of the cutter, to which they were taken, somewhat discomposed Gillis, but not Leary. "Well, Mr. Stapkins, how's herrin' in Saint Johns?" that self-possessed adventurer inquired slyly.

Upholstered chairs are comforts which fishermen always appreciate. With heads far back and legs stretched out across the carpet, the pair took note of things. A young man with a notebook and typewriting machine caused Gillis to remark, "Not like our courts in America, Sam, is it?"

Stapkins, overhearing, fixed on Gillis a threatening eye. "No, not like an American court, but it will serve our purpose. And now you"—he nodded at Leary—"listen. We've got all the evidence we want, and——"

Sam sat up. "Evidence? Of what?"

"Evidence of the rum you smuggled from Saint Pierre. You can stand trial here or you can come back with us to Saint Johns and there wait in jail till your appearance in the high court. Which will you do?"

"H-m—you know how much time the master or mate of an American vessel has to waste on a trip to Saint Johns. I'll stand trial here, although

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the Lord knows I haven't the most far-away notion of what it's all about."

"Well, you'll know soon. Here are some facts," and Stapkins read from several sheets of paper.

The details were precise. To wit: That the *Arbiter* left Saint Pierre on such a day with two ten-gallon kegs of rum, which rum was not found entered on her manifest; that on the evening of her arrival, at 5.30 post meridian to be exact, of the second day previous, a dory bearing the name of the *Arbiter*, of Gloucester, landed on the beach abreast of the vessel aforesaid; that two men took from the dory a keg or kegs of liquor of some kind and carried the said keg or kegs up on the beach and hid it or them in a barn said to be owned by Oliver Shepherd. And further, that liquor from one of the kegs was drunk at Shepherd's on the night following, "all of which," concluded Stapkins, "we have witness to prove."

Sam grinned. "That there was some liquor drunk in Oliver's you won't have to go far to get a witness to, for you ought to know one at least who was asked to have a drink of it"—he bowed ironically to Stapkins—"but how you're making out it came from any particular keg beats me. I used to think I was a connesoor in the rum line, but whether rum comes from this keg or that, if

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it's all of the same makin', is past me. But where's your proof for all this?"

"Time enough for proof. Perhaps you know that if this thing is continued too far the vessel is likely to be captured?"

"Confiscate a fourteen-thousand dollar vessel for a few dollars duty, even if your charge is true! No, sir, you're not going to get away with that, though 'tis so much a custom as to become common law almost to bleed American vessels at every chance down here."

"I might warn you that there is a Gloucester vessel serving as a lightship over to Miramachi way even now for smuggling."

Above all else Sam feared for trouble to the skipper or vessel, but to him it looked yet as if they were still shrewdly guessing, no more. So he replied calmly enough: "But what's a confiscated vessel to do with me?"

"Mister Stapkins." Here, to Sam's amazement, Gillis jumped to his feet.

III

YOUNG Gillis possessed not Sam's outlook on life. To him the law, at close quarters, was a terrible thing; and here it seemed to him that it

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was about to get Sam, the vessel, and the skipper in its clutches. And to these three he was devoted; to the master by respect, to the vessel by instinct of duty, to Sam by ties of wondrous admiration. Here was his chance. Sam had told him to stand by.

“Mister Stapkins, I want to confess.”

“Confess? You? Confess what!”

“Let me speak. It is true that there was a couple of ten-gallon kegs of rum put aboard the *Arbiter* in Saint Peer. I know, because 'twas me brought 'em aboard and hid 'em in the hold. 'Twas me, when we dropped anchor yesterday, that stowed them in the dory under a bit of canvas, so's nobody noticed; and then, while all hands were busy with the collector and Captain Curtin there, 'twas me, it bein' dark, rowed ashore, without anybody seein' me, and hid 'em in Shepherd's barn.”

The magistrate, who heretofore had taken no more active part in the proceedings than to listen calmly, and whom the fishermen had barely noticed, now leaned forward, and again settled back, and once more leaned forward. Steadying himself—he had evidently come for the purpose of advising also—he remarked to Stapkins: “H-m—but I can't see how this alters the case. The charge remains against the vessel.” He addressed Gillis, “You're one of the crew, of course?”



“ ’Twas me that stowed them in the dory.”

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There was a gleam in the magistrate's eye which Leary's intuition interpreted in a flash. "Him one of the crew," and laughed derisively. Gillis stared at Leary, who, shaking his fist at him, exploded again, "Don't you dare to tell this court you're one of the crew."

The court looked from one to the other. "Not one of the crew? Is this true, Captain Leary?"

Leary, who had been expecting some small action from Gillis at the critical moment, but no such romantic tale as this of the keg, was beginning to glow with the possibilities. He sought to gain a little time now. He affected not to hear the question until it was repeated with emphasis, "Is this the truth or a lie, sir?"

To Leary's brain came a glimmering of where it might lead to, but no need to hurry yet. "You don't notice me calling anyone a liar, do you?"

"Not a member of your crew? Aha!" The magistrate rose triumphant: "Then how came he aboard your vessel? How came you to bring this man from a foreign country, which the United States is, to this country, in plain violation of the law?"

Unexpected that, but Leary felt equal to it. Pausing no longer than was needful to give his most serviceable imagination a running start, with no notion at the moment of where he would finish

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up than the men who were listening to him, he began; and his tone was most judicial, as befitted the surroundings. "It does seem to be against the law, and yet it is not. There's a provision of law in every country, I suppose—in every civilized country, I mean—there is in ours, anyway—for bringing home the sick and the—indigent, is it?—and wrecked seamen, bringing them to their home port. This man, gentlemen, is from Gloucester. He shipped in a Gloucester fisherman, the *Mollie Butler*, Captain Arthur Morrow—look her up in the register, if you want to—for a fresh halibutin' trip—and was taken sick. What was it you were sick of, Mister Gillis?"

"Consumption" responded Gillis, and coughed weakly by way of illustration.

The cough did not seem to be convincing. "Consumption!" The magistrate glared at Gillis. Stapkins and Curtin had another look at that husky-looking youth. "H-m!" grunted Curtin.

"Yes, sir, they made me sleep in a tent on the rocks," affirmed the now inspired Gillis. "I was in the first stages, and could be cured that way, they said. Outdoor treatment, the latest. But I think myself they put me up on the rocks because they thought I was an Englishman."

"How could they think that?"

"It may be, your honor," Sam bowed gravely

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to the magistrate, "because he talked United States, which is a good deal like English.

"Sure, that was it." Gillis seized on that. "For they told me to my face they had no use for the English. You remember me telling you that, Mister Leary?"

"I do, Mister Gillis. Only this morning you were telling me again, if you remember, and how they sent you off at last in a French fisherman——"

"Sent you off? What for?"

"Why—why——"

"Such foolish questions!" interposed Sam hastily. He knew that his shipmate's inventive faculties sometimes failed. "How does he know what those high-handed despots shipped him off for? And what does it matter? The real thing is he was run off and the vessel was wrecked, and the *Arbiter* came along and picked up Mister Gillis."

"And the French crew? Were they drowned? Sh-h—Captain Leary—I'm questioning Mister Gillis now."

Gillis was gamely trying to keep up with the mental pace of his more imaginative mate. "Every blessed soul of 'em," he managed to get out.

"H-m—but that's a fine tale to have to piece out," murmured Leary. "They'll be lookin' her up in the marine tragedies."

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"Serves 'em right." It was the magistrate who thus commented as he leaned back and glared at whoever might disagree. Stapkins and Curtin regarded the prisoners with less complacency.

"And"—Sam was now carelessly resuming the tale, his eyes on the portly justice. He ran on smoothly—"we couldn't do less than take him along now, could we, your Honor? Though if he did serve the vessel this mean trick"—he glared at Gillis; but softening suddenly: "But did you really do it, Mister Gillis? Tell the truth now, for his Honor is listening to you."

The brain of Gillis was in a whirl, but he thought to stare contritely at the floor, and, after a decent interval, and sniffingly, "I did."

Sam gazed in amaze; as might any honest man on a most despicable creature. "You did? Gawd! You sit there and not ashamed to say those words! To me, your rescuer, and in a way your captain now? You knew what might come of it, didn't you? You hear what his Honor says? Why, if the truth weren't forced out of you by his eloquence, by his legal—h-m—acumen, my vessel might be confiscated. As it is, I suppose I'll have to pay a few dollars fine on your account. O Gillis, when I think how we risked the vessel and the crew's lives that day picking you off the wreck! A wild day, your Honor—a wild day, gentlemen—

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mountain-e-ous seas, and wind to peel the scales off a herrin'. We had to pour oil over the side of the vessel afore the skipper would allow a dory to be launched. And if you had heard the cries of him, gentlemen, this man who has just confessed his iniquity, who has admitted how he deceived us and rendered the vessel liable—if you'd heard the agonized cries of him! They fair bit into us, his cries—we couldn't stand it, and the crew knew 'twas almost sure death; but, the brave fellows, when the skipper calls out, 'Who'll volunteer to save him, a fellow-being?' says he. 'No degenerate Frenchman, but speaks the same great Anglo-Saxon language as we do ourselves—who'll volunteer?' If you only heard Captain Clancy saying that, your Honor! And did they draw back, your Honor? Or even hesitate? Not them. 'Me, Captain!' 'Me!' 'Me!'—and they leaps up and fights for the privilege of goin' in that dory. And the two the captain picked thanked him with tears in their eyes. 'If I don't come back, Captain,' says the first brave fellow, 'send word to my parents in Birmingham and tell them how I died,' for he was of sturdy English stock, your Honor. 'I've no wife, but my savin's-bank book for forty-two dollars and forty-four cents, and whatever interest's due on it, is in my bunk. Give it to the widows and orphans,' says the other, and over they

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go. But they warn't drowned, not them, the brave fellows. Their guardian angels was busy that day, though. And when they came back, after incredible exertions, they had him—had this man, gentlemen, half-frozen, faintin'—but I suppose he don't remember it now?" Sam's voice reeked with what he meant for the very essence of sarcasm.

Gillis had been gaping in wonder at Leary—indeed, he was almost in tears as he conjured up the picture painted by his gifted shipmate, himself a craven. For a moment he could not take the cue; but an offside wink from Leary pointed the way.

"I do remember it, I do remember it. Forgive me, I do." And, holding one hand to his face and uttering, "Forgive me, forgive me," Gillis sought to clutch Sam's sleeve with the other.

Sam spurned the groping hand. "Tuh! go away."

"But, Captain"—Gillis held a handkerchief to his eyes—"Captain Leary, for-give me, O Captain!"

"For-give yuh! How can you expect for-giveness! The treachery of you, a man we'd saved from a watery grave and taken to our bosom—" and Sam, drawing out his handkerchief, passed it lingeringly over his eyes, then fell desperately to blowing his nose. All this before he felt strong to continue: "But what's the good of harboring

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wicked, revengeful feelings? And, your Honor, what did the smuggling mean, anyway? A little feeling of adventure on Mister Gillis's part. I used to be like him in my young days, thoughtless, reckless, careless of the owner's interests. Which of us isn't careless in his—I mean of us ignorant fishermen, your Honor, who haven't had the educational advantages? And yet I didn't think he would do such a thing. Only the other day"—he faced Gillis—"I was speaking of you to Captain Clancy—you seemed to be so earnest and good, that I asked him if he couldn't put you on the ship's papers soon. And now this trick you come to play!"

"I know, but I'll never do it again."

"Never!"

"Never, never."

"Well, I dunno what to say. When I come to think now how near the vessel came to being pinched! Your Honor, I have nothing more to say," and Leary sat down.

The court breathed hard, gazed long from one prisoner to the other; and finally took counsel with Captain Curtin and Stapkins.

"I'm sure I don't know what to think of that fellow," whispered the magistrate to Stapkins. "An ignorant fisherman like him, he couldn't have made it up on the spur of the moment."

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"I wouldn't be too sure he's so ignorant. But you can fine them on their own testimony."

"But this isn't real testimony, this isn't court."

"What odds about court? We've got to have a conviction recorded. You are the magistrate. You can convene court, and we are the witnesses to what they confessed."

IV

THE final decision was to manage it in some way to fine both Leary and Gillis, but it was also agreed that appearances would be better served if a regular court was held. So ashore they all went; and, pressing into service a constable, an aged native who loved the trappings of the judiciary, they convened court in the informal but sufficiently effective fashion of the more primitive regions of Newfoundland.

Stapkins, after rereading the evidence, turned to the solemn gentlemen on the platform: "And now the Crown prays the judgment of this honorable court on the facts aforesaid." And the honorable court accordingly rendered its finding, going over the facts minutely, repeating for the fourth or fifth time the gist of the whole case. "And the prisoner must understand," and the way

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he turned down his spectacles at Gillis was so impressive to that free-born adventurer that he whispered to Leary, "If ever I get to be a judge, I'll know how to throw my lamps on a man that ought to be hanged."

"You must know," resumed the judge, "that your offence is most heinous and makes you liable to a most severe penalty. By the language of the law you are not alone liable to be sent to prison for an indefinite term——"

"How long is that, Sammie?" Gillis's whisper could have been heard the length of an ocean liner.

The judge heard it. "Eh, what? Silence, silence!" he roared, and motioned to the ancient retainer, who also roared, "Silence, silence!" and thumped the floor with the fresh-cut birch sapling which served as a mace.

The judge glared at Leary also ere he continued. "Not alone to prison, but your vessel is also likely to be confiscated. Vessels have been confiscated to the Crown before this. You are aware of that, doubtless. There is not only that lightship at Miramichi——"

"A fine little vessel, Sammie, too—I know her," whispered Gillis.

"The prisoners will pay attention. The confiscation of a vessel is no light matter. What have you to say, Captain Leary?"

"Nothing."

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"Nothing? Do you fully realize what the consequences may be? It does not add to your case that you have not testified in your own behalf."

"What's the use! You've got it all framed up to suit yourselves. Here's a man, a passenger on the vessel, charged with smuggling a few gallons of rum, and you talk about confiscating a vessel worth fourteen thousand dollars. And you haven't proved your case. You say it's now regular court. If it is, then bring on your proof."

Stapkins jumped to his feet. "I don't see as we need any further proof. What more evidence is required than the confession of your partner a while ago in the cabin of the cutter?"

"But does that commit a man? Does a man talking careless like——"

"Do you deny he said it? Or deny the story of the rescue?"

Sam threw up his hands. "What's the damage?"

"That is for the court to say." Stapkins bowed deferentially to the law.

The court puffed up roundly. "As the prisoners plead guilty—you do plead guilty?"

"Yes," replied Sam wearily. "We plead guilty to a couple of kegs of rum. And now you want to do the usual thing to American vessels down here—bleed us for all we'll stand. Well, better soak us now you got us."

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The judge frowned on Leary, but went on, after much hemming and hawing, to deliver himself of various original phrases which were preliminary to a long dissertation. "Albeit the law says—and Anglo-Saxon—and frat-ernal—and mat-ernal——"

"And pat-ernal, don't forget the old man, whoever he is."

"Heh, heh—and mat-ernal ties—one speech and one blood," and suddenly abandoning his meandering phraseology, fined them one hundred dollars apiece.

Gillis flared up. "A hundred? No, Sir—me for jail."

"Me, too," Sam turned to Stapkins. "I'll appeal to my Gover'ment—show you fellows up, anyway. Better cut it down."

A conference ensued, which ended by the judge saying, after casting a look of inquiry at Sam, as if doubtful how that belligerent man would take it. "Well, twenty-five dollars apiece."

"Twenty-five? Well, all right, though mind"—he looked defiance at Stapkins—"you never proved it."

The worthy magistrate eyed almost tearfully the great roll which Sam drew from his ulster pocket. "If I had known," he whispered to Stapkins, "that he had so much money with him, I would not have taken off one penny."

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From the roll Leary skinned off two twenties. "Wages due me," he explained to Gillis, and from an inner pocket he took ten dollars in small bills. "All I won at poker from the natives since we hit into the bay," and sighed as he passed it over. Then, turning to the magistrate, "We can go now, I suppose?"

"You are free."

"Then, good-day," and, pausing at the door, "To hell with you all." And, placing his arm through Gillis's: "Lord, after that one-tongue, one-blood speech, I thought he was going to let us off; but I guess he needed the money. He's like a lot of others that love us till their interests take 'em another way." Then, noticing that they were passing a window of the court-room, he raised it, looked inside, and, catching Captain Curtin's eye, to him he tipped a most illuminating wink, at which Curtin looked at Stapkins and Stapkins looked at Curtin, and a great light broke in on them both; and together they looked at the judge. But that honorable was recounting the money, whereat Stapkins and Curtin shook their heads and smiled, but with mouths somewhat awry.

The late prisoners resumed their road to the vessel. Sam wore a most pensive look. Finally he spoke up.

"Gillis, this ought to teach you not to be going

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and getting drunk with other people's rum. Paying that fine raised the devil with my pile. I had in mind to buy Bess a little present. A fine girl, that Bess Shepherd. You haven't got a spare ten or twenty, have you?"

"Me a ten or twenty? I got a five, though. But I had it in mind to buy a little present for somebody, too."

"You buy presents! Don't you think you ought to rest on your laurels for a little while? Let me have that five-spot, and I'll borrow five more from the skipper's money. There's a pearl necklace at the jewellery store up in Birchy Cove, and the man said he'd let me have it for nine seventy-five. All the girls in the bay have been eyein' it, but it'll look best on Bess. O Lord, the things I could 've done with that fifty!" Then, sighing thoughtfully: "Blessed if I don't believe, Gillis, it does pay to be honest. You see, Gillis, honesty's the one game that everybody's playin', good people all the time, but bad people sometimes, for their own interest, if nothing else. Buckin' against honesty's like tryin' to sail into the eye of the wind, and you can't do it—you have to beat."

"Less you got steam-power, Sammie."

"Then you're not sailin'. You're like a man then with an inside pull. And if your steam gives out you're worse off than if you'd started

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out with only sail in the first place. Yes, sir, I'm beginnin' to believe it's best to be honest in everything. Do you know, Gillis"—Leary became very confidential—"but sometimes I doubt that even smugglin's quite the right thing."

"And I've often had my doubts, too, Sammie."

And thus these two reflective gentlemen, reclothing ancient philosophies, climbed soberly down the rocky hillsides.

BETWEEN SHIPMATES

Between Shipmates

“**F**RENCHIE” and his old-time chum had not spoken to each other since the vessel put out, and it was very awkward altogether. Here were two men who had to sit at the same table, to share the same bunk, and to overhaul trawls together in cramped quarters below, each trying, by every evasion of look, word, and deed, not to let on that he ever knew that the other even existed.

But there was no way out of standing watch, nor of taking the wheel the one from the other and passing the skipper’s word—“By the wind,” “east, half south, and nothing to”—or whatever else it might be. That was the hard thing—they could not conceal it from the crew—the having to speak to each other.

“And what’s it all about?” queried the crew, and they would have liked to smooth matters out but knew better than to attempt it in the usual way, for neither was of the kind of men that open their hearts to casual inquiry, however well-intentioned. So, though the mystery had not been solved, it was a great relief to nearly all hands

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when, the vessel having arrived on the grounds, the two men put off to set trawls.

"To nearly all." There were yet those who worried. "For, if a hundred-ton vessel is cert'nly narrow for two that's fallen out, what of a sixteen-foot dory?" mused these. "What of a sixteen-foot dory, where they can't be passing for'ard or aft without forever falling foul of each other?" and in the most incidental sort of way in the world they glanced over their shoulders—casting about for weather signs by the way—to see what the pair would do in the more restricted quarters.

But nothing happened—leastwise not in the sight of the crew. They only saw that it was Arnold, handiest to the baited tub of trawls, who cast over buoy and anchor; and Frenchie, the man of noted endurance even among a fleet of trawlers, who yanked the thole pins into their sockets and rowed superbly to the west'ard.

Ordinarily those two expert fishermen would not have gone astray that day. In their instinctive fashion both noticed the sure signs of the fog line before it shut out the vessel; but the wires were still down—neither was going to let on by so much as the least anxious exclamation that he felt the slightest concern. Even when the fog had enveloped them, and by concerted action there was yet time to haul their trawls and make the vessel

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before it was too late, neither betokened, by the faintest sign, his sense of impending peril.

So, the tide carrying them gradually beyond the sound of the horn, they let her drift. Each was cheerfully prepared to be lost and to die of hunger, thirst, exhaustion, or of all three combined, before he would speak the first word; and even later, when they could no longer doubt, with fog as impenetrable as a wall about and dark night upon them, with death, most likely, close at hand—even then they were prepared to continue the prideful silence.

During all that night their dory drifted, and neither man made move until dawn. Then did Arnold, who seemed to be waiting only for the light, pick up the low-marked water bottle and, carefully estimating with his eye, mark the half-measure of what remained with his finger-nail. Long he held the bottle aloft, ostentatiously elevated it, gagging with thirst though he was, and even clinked his cold knuckles against the glass; but, Frenchie never turning to note the fair judgment, Arnold drank his religious half wrathfully and corked and set the bottle down with a rattle; whereat Frenchie turned leisurely, and, palpably without a look, drank what was left and tossed far away the empty bottle.

The splash of the bottle in the sea was like a

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signal to action. Arnold, taking the stern thwart and making a place for his feet among the fish, set his oars between the thole pins, and, auricularly assured that his mate was in position, began, by pulling on his left and backing on his right oar, to work the bow of the dory around. Instinctively Frenchie opened his mouth to protest, but, before the word could issue from his lips, bit it off savagely. No, he was not going to speak first; no, not even though speech might mean life to them.

Arnold's ear caught the gurgle behind, and, hoping that his mate was about to say something, paused gladly to hear it. Indeed, to his mind, the matter had gone far enough; but no word came to him, and sullenly he forced the oars through the water. His own ideas of the whereabouts of the vessel were vague, while his dory-mate, as all men knew, had a famous sense of location; and yet, if he didn't care enough about it to say a word, when he saw the dory being headed in the wrong direction, then he wasn't caring either. So away from the vessel, Frenchie by his silence concurring, they rowed the dory.

Rowing and resting—each consulting his own will as to that, but each doing manfully what he considered his share—they rowed on, night and day, and night and day again, with nothing to eat or drink, until the weary pain of it was beyond all

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mortal strength—certainly for Arnold, who well knew he never could last with the iron man behind him. Arnold by then had lost all count of time—whether three, four, or five days had elapsed he could not say—but he was struggling desperately to hold out, determined not to admit himself beaten; and yet he had about made up his mind at last to quit—to say, “Frenchie, I’m done,” nothing else, when——

Frenchie, his eyes half closed, saw Arnold’s back lunge forward, and, an instant later, the oars slide through the thole pins and the body fall off the seat and into the bottom of the dory. But he did not slack his stroke at once; only slowly did it dawn on him that Arnold really was unconscious. His first thought was one of exultation—and so he had worn him down? But, with another glance at the inert figure, tenderness and pity flashed from him. “No!” he cried, and bent over the limp body. “But so it ees.” Even then he did not address a direct remark to the sagging body, but only picked him up and laid him in the stern. Long ago they had cast away the load of fish, and a light dory rides better for a weight in the stern. So Frenchie made a pretense of arguing, ashamed to admit even to himself that he had put his mate in the stern solely because it was the least uncomfortable place in

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the little boat. "And good summer weather," murmured Frenchie—"and so he shall not freeze."

Two more days and a night of lonely labor and Frenchie made out a red light bearing down. Perhaps a point off his own course it was, but still a good distance away, and there might be time to place the dory directly in her course. He had hailed a sail only the night before and got no answer. No more hailing at a distance for him! "A good t'ing her wasn't her starb'd light," said Frenchie, "or I wouldn't seen her so soon," and he tugged hard at the oars. "And now they must pick me up or run me down—and I not certain I care so much if she run me down, for I been damn tired."

But to be weary was not to be vanquished. No, nor near it. Long days and nights of hunger, thirst, and travail on the lonely sea had not quenched his spirit. They used to say of Frenchie, on the vessel, that, if ever he should come to die, he'd certainly die hard. So "Aboard the bark!" he hailed now—"h—i—i—the bark!" There was nothing of deception in that barrel chest and bull neck. 'Twas the rumble of an organ. "A—hoy—hi—hi—i—the bark!" he hailed again, and to such effect this time that not only was the slumbrous watch awakened, but the mate, having a mug of coffee for himself in the cabin, came

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bundling up on deck before the watch could call him.

The mate peered over the side. Coming suddenly from light to dark, he could as yet see nothing clearly. "Who is it?" he bellowed.

"Me!" answered Frenchie, from his dory.

The mate again peered over the rail, leaning now far out and down. He at last made out the shadow of the little boat below. "And who're you, and what do you want?"

"I'm Gloucester—American feesher-man—strayed from my ves—sel in fog. And thees my dory-mate—'most dead—maybe dead. Lower your falls, plees, and hoist heem aboard."

The resolute tone of Frenchie influenced the mate to quicker action than he had intended. The tackle was unhooked and dropped over. Frenchie made the line fast about his dory-mate, and anxiously observed it as the falls creaked above; and "Tak' a care—tak' a care—he 'most dead!" he warned in a plaintive voice, as he saw that the body was allowed to knock once or twice against the side of the bark.

"Take care? Who's doing this?" demanded the mate, and therewith, having Arnold's body on board, he allowed it to drop roughly to the deck; and "Come on, you, and hurry," he added as he lowered the falls again.

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"Yes, yes, but not so fast. Now, then, a'right—hoist away."

The man above tugged at the leads. The mate, noting what slow progress they were making, peered over the side. He soon understood what was wrong. "The blasted derelict! he's made fast his boat, too!" Man and dory were being hoisted together. "What in the devil's name does he think?—we're stevedores?" and he let slip the after falls.

Down splashed the stern of the dory and into it rushed the sea. It was up to Frenchie's knees in a moment, and, the men continuing to hoist, the bow of the dory was rearing up. Frenchie, barely grasping the bow falls in time, began to climb, hand over hand to the rope and feet to the side of the bark. A moment later he was on the deck, but such work!

"Cast off!" ordered the mate. "And you—get below, you!" he barked at Frenchie, who was gazing over the side at his dory, now filled and drifting away, and almost sobbing as he gazed.

"You should not done that. Not right—not right—a beau—ti—ful do—ree, and four tubs fine trawl!" He repeated the words sadly.

"Blast you and your trawls—go below!"

"Oh, yes, I go below." Frenchie leaned against the rail for a moment. "You skipper?"

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"No, I'm not skipper. He's below and asleep—and knows better than to wake easy or interfere when it's my watch. But go below, or I'll——"

Frenchie raised a deprecating hand. "Oh, oh—no need, sair"—and he stooped to lift his dory-mate. Arnold moaned as Frenchy raised him from the deck, and "Gra-a—" gurgled Frenchie, and he turned to carry him below; and, as on the vessel he and Arnold bunked in the cabin, so now he headed for the after deck of the bark.

"Come out of that—for'ard with you!" spluttered the mate. But Frenchie, by that time, was carefully descending the cabin steps with never a notion of turning back.

He laid Arnold on the nearest locker. Arnold groaned; Frenchie patted the haggard cheeks. "Steady, boy—steady! Soon you be all fixed up." For the first time since they had put out from Gloucester he touched Arnold with unrestrained tenderness, and the act gave him joy. "Hush, boy, hush!—you soon have the good hot coffee."

"Say it again—the good hot what?"

Frenchie looked up. The mate was at his shoulder, his eyes gleaming satirically. "The good hot *what*, did you say?"

"Coffee," repeated Frenchie. "He 'most dead.

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One, two, three"—he counted on his fingers—"Seex, may be se'en days, seven nights, astray in hees do-ree. You been astray ever—not'ing to eat, not'ing to drink? He 'most dead, I say."

"And s'pose he *was* dead altogether—who's in command here? You damn Gloucesterm'n, it's just like one of you to think you c'n jump aboard here in the middle of the night and step into the officer's cabin and give orders. But not here, you don't. Maybe you can do that under your fast-and-loose American-manned, but not on no British bottom. Here"—he slid back a door in the bulk-head partition—"here's where you chaps go."

Frenchie peered in. What he saw was the hold of the bark, black and forbidding, piled high with coal. "In there?" Frenchy shook his head. "For me, ver' good; for my doree-mate, no. He need hot coffee and bunk. And hot coffee and bunk he *shall* have. Shall have, I say." Frenchie articulated those precise words with exceeding distinctness. "And right away—at once, I say. No?" Then, thanking the good God for the strength which all men said was his in abundance, he rolled back his sleeves. The uncovered forearms loomed round, bronzed, and abnormal in development. Small wonder he could row a dory. "Hot coffee for my doree-

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mate, I say. Do you hear it?" and, with the veins swelling large under his ears, he was about to leap on the mate when the cabin boy, awakened from his sleep, stepped into the light. Frenchie spied him. What need to fight, after all? "Get hot coffee and mak' up bunk—a good bunk for my ship-mate. Jump! or I lick you, too!"

The boy looked to the mate.

"Oh, you want heem to give order?" Frenchie grinned frightfully. "Well, in one mo-ment he shall order. Geev him order. No?" The battle was on. An immense creature was the mate but a creature of nothing behind the vast muscles, nothing of the fibre of this wild man who had come aboard in the night, and who now, like a demon, saying never a word, but smashing, griping, throttling, using fingers, fists, elbows, knees—anything—head, shoulders—went at him, and soon made a mess of him. In five or six minutes it may have been, the big glowering hulk had been reduced to a groveling, bloody mass that sought to draw itself into the remotest corner of the cabin, to shrink itself into the seams of the planking, by way of caulking, as it were.

When there came no further oaths or words of abuse, Frenchie bent his head. "Well?" he asked, and relaxed his terrible fingers that the mate might speak the word.

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"Coffee—hot—and biscuit," gurgled the mate to the cabin boy.

"And bunk?"

"And a bunk—two bunks."

"No—one bunk. The coal in hold plenty good for me," said Frenchie; and on the coal, when Arnold had come to life again and was tucked away in a bunk, he laid himself with heartfelt thanksgiving. *Bon Dieu*, but he was tired!

A long time Frenchie slept. The light of morning—not the next, but the morning after—was flooding the companionway when he slid back the door in the bulkhead, and stepped into the cabin. There was a pot of coffee on the cabin table and beside it some biscuits, to which, without seeking anybody's leave, he helped himself as naturally as if he were aboard his own vessel.

He ate all the biscuits on the table, and with them took four cups of coffee and would have taken more but that no more remained in the pot; after which, with sublime feelings in his heart, he ran up the companionway and all but bowled over a man that he guessed to be the master of the bark, as he leaped onto the deck.

It was a large but somewhat weak-looking

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man, who gazed admiringly and waved his hand pleasantly as Frenchie was about to apologize.

"You the skipper?"

"In the ship's papers I'm so rated." Then, most irrelevantly, he asked, "You don't happen to want a second-mate's berth, do you?"

"I'm feesherman."

"I know—I wasn't altogether asleep last night. You're the quality for second mate and won't have to bother much with navigation. The mate will be most of your concern—just polish him off once in a while. Six or seven days astray, you say?"

"Seex or sev'n—hard to say—yes, sair."

"Lord, the things you could 'a' done, if you'd been fresh!—this morning, for instance."

"This morning!" Frenchie took a full breath and threw his head toward the blue sky. "This morning!"—and he gazed long on the green sea. "This morning!" and, looking ahead, he saw where the horizon lumped like a row of low clouds. "Land? So 'tees—yes. Ah-h—" and suddenly he leaped off the poop and ran forward. "Georgie!"

Arnold, who was leaning over the bow devouring the land with his eyes, did not hear Frenchie approach; and the latter, as he drew nearer, found himself overcome with the strangest feelings. Perhaps Arnold would not speak to him

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even now. He stood shy and silent, till Arnold, turning casually, saw him, and, catching the rare look in his shipmate's eyes, could no longer restrain himself. "Hullo, Frenchie!"

Frenchie felt ashamed—to think that he thought Arnold would not speak to him. "Hullo, Georgie!" and he smiled foolishly.

Then both were silent. It was almost as if they were in the dory again, with their grim wills in control. But Frenchie had been making up his mind all the length of the deck, and he was not to be overcome now. "How you feel, Georgie? A leetle tired, boy—yes?"

"A little, Frenchie. But if it hadn't been for you, I cal'late I'd be more than *tired*. I'd be dead and gone."

Frenchie fingered the collar of his flannel shirt. "Spick sense, Georgie—spick sense."

"That's sense. And, Frenchie——"

"Yes?"

Arnold looked fearfully at his mate. "Frenchie, bout that night down to Long Beach. Why, Frenchie, I had no more notion of tryin' to cut in on you than of—oh, all I saw was a girl that looked 's if she was waitin' for somebody—I'd no notion who for—and I butts in. And when you walked by—why, 'f I'd known 't was for you she'd been waitin'——"

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Frenchie laid a hand on his shipmate's arm. "Her? Georgie—boy, to hell with her. What is one damn red-head girl, Georgie, between shipmates?" And so, reunited, they leaned over the bow and gazed fondly at the looming shore of their own fair country.

THE ICE-DOGS

The Ice-Dogs

IN the brackish waters of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, to which the entire west coast of Newfoundland is exposed, the winter ice forms early and stays late. By the end of December the ice-fields, which are even then beginning to lock in the westerly coast of Labrador, need only a hard frost to become welded into solid floes; and these floes but a fresh northerly gale to start on their way; and once on the way there is no halt until the entire west coast of Newfoundland has been shut in and one vast ice-lake formed of the gulf.

Whatever vessel is fairly caught in the gulf by that moving mass is there to stay, crushed generally like a toy-store boat, until the warmer breezes of late spring cast the crumpled planking free. Once in a great while a craft so caught drifts about in the ice, and, escaping uncrushed, is picked up, a floating derelict, in the warmer weather, but never in such are any live men found.

Familiar with all the traditions of the dreaded gulf ice, knowing well the danger that lay before them, the master of the *Arbiter* very well knew what the trader Lackford had in mind when he

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hailed after his departing vessel: "Well, you've got your load, but you'll never get to the States with it. You'll do well if you don't leave her out in the gulf—and you and your crew's bones in her. She'll make a fine hard-pine coffin for you all!"

"Hard pine and oak," the master amended, grimly—"good three-inch oak to her topsides," and lightly swung his little schooner out of the north arm of the Bay of Islands. He had loaded her in the teeth of opposition, and what Lackford and his associates thought mattered little now.

In the restricted waters of North Arm the gale, coming in puffs only, had allowed intervals of rest; but in the more open reaches of the bay there was no easement from the force and bite of it. Down it came from off the headlands in shooting, whistling squalls that, inshore, cut the crests off the ambitious little seas as if edged with steel, and offshore threatened to snatch the canvas from the vessel; and still rushing onward, did whip the width and breadth of the surface of the bay till all alee was a turmoil of white spume; and so cold was it that the men were forced to duck their heads sideways to the wind and spray.

And yet in it was a beauty to inspire, as the crew, intent on their work, could not but notice. There was the vessel tearing through a rolling level of feather-white; there were the heavens unflecked,

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and of a blue so pale as to have a touch of green in it; and only that tint of greenish-blue in all that frosty sky, except for one long streak of vivid crimson edging the crests of the high hills now coming abeam; and the hollows of those same hills, ordinarily so gray and forbidding, were now invested with those purplish shadows which, the natives say, never cling just so except before the twilight of a clear, freezing winter's day.

"God in heaven, but 'tis grand!" murmured the master; breathed it like a prayer, but might not look his fill because of the danger ahead, where from the mists loomed steep-sided heights, which would need to be weathered ere they were free of the threatening waters in the Bay of Islands.

From the hard-featured old bluff called Blow-me-down came the gale in renewed gusts, before which the *Arbiter* again and again careened so dangerously that even this habituated crew gazed thoughtfully down the icy slope of her deck. But always the master watched, and eye and judgment never failing, she was luffed, and luffed again, never too soon to lose distance, never too late for salvation.

The crew, standing by the sheets, blew on their fingers and threshed benumbed hands across their muffled-up breasts. "Wow! but somebody's ketchin' it somewhere to-night!"

The Ice-Dogs

“Ay, the devil to pay—the dance of the ice-dogs in the gulf to-night.”

Presently the surf of St. Mary's rock boiled out under their port rail. By then full night had wrapped them round, and the outlines of grim old Weebald, guardian to the southern pass, were but faintly framed in the shadows.

“No harm if we don't see him—we'll know when we lay him abeam by the roar of the swash rushing up the steep side of him. The backwash will all but smother our starb'd rail if we run the course true.” And sure enough it was the thunderous wintry surf booming up the iron crags, rather than any conventional sailor's means of reckoning, which assured them where the huge rock lay as they shot by the shrouded base.

With Weebald astern there was no longer the worry of navigation in close waters. Thereafter the danger was plain. From Bay of Islands to Cape Ray was no farther than the *Arbiter* had sailed on many a winter's night; a dash, no more, even for a sailing craft through water—if the course were put as the birds fly. But half-way down the coast was Cape St. George jutting out into the gulf like another little continent, and below that St. Anguille again, ere they could make Cape Ray.

And it was not alone the lengthened distance of the doubling course: the wind that had been

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blowing fairly from the north for a week was now to the west. Observed the master: "After giving the ice a good shove, it had to haul to head us off. A dead beat all the way. And 'twill be ice to one side of us and the cliffs of the shore to the other. We know where the cliffs are, and, thank the Lord, they can't move. But only the Lord knows where the ice is—or will be. But we'll put her on the northerly tack now, get as far offshore as we can before it gets us;" and so, under pressure of all the canvas her spars would spread, the little schooner bore into the portentous waters of St. Lawrence Gulf.

Night was merging into day, and the pale rays of a freezing winter's dawn were uncovering the restless seas, ere they could guess how matters stood in the gulf. From the deck was cold tossing green water as far as a man could see; but from the masthead, where Clancy presently ascended, the waters toward the western horizon were seen to be dotted with pieces of ice. Well the master knew them—little cakes they would be, large as the top of a hatch or the bottom of a dory. No great harm them; but in their wake would be the almost solid stuff, the great fields which were immovable to the power of man as the shore itself.

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Despite the threatening outlook, they would have to work farther offshore, or by and by when they put to the southward they would be unable to fetch by Cape St. George. So to the west and north the fast-sailing *Arbiter* continued to eat up the rapid miles.

In good time they found the young ice as expected, not crowded close, but tossing wide, with plenty of free water between, nowhere sufficiently close-set to stop a hard-driven vessel; and certainly not this vessel, which had come from out of the bay and into the gulf like one running from the fear of death.

The master studied the situation. "We certainly can't weather Cape George on the next tack from here. We must get further offshore, further to the west'ard yet. It's the solid stuff we have to watch for now. Go aloft, you Sam, and have an eye out for it."

Up the fore-rigging heaved Sam Leary, humming serenely to the swaying rat-lines:

"For when that we see,
Tis then 'twill be
Off on our heels
And away wi' we!"

"And devil a stop then for anything this side of hell, hah, Sammie?" concluded, most unmetrically, a discursive watchmate, Gillis by name.

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The master was having a reflective mug-up below, when, "Ice-O!" came from aloft. Bolt-ing the meat and gulping the coffee, he piled up on deck. "Solid?"

"No'therly it's solid, but I can't say yet to the west'ard."

The master joined Leary aloft. "You're right, I think, Sammie, but we'll make sure. Hand up the glasses, one of you. Man! but it's a cold draught that spills into a fellow's chest up here!"

He examined the horizon to the northward; a moment and he swept the glasses to the westward. "I'm not too sure it won't head us off, Sammie, if we don't put about soon. Oh, below there! call up the gang to shift the stays'l—we'll be tackin' in a minute. Hurry 'em. This stuff is too handy entirely, though we'll get away at that. But hold—what in God's name! Look, Sammie, look, boy! There—see nothing?"

"A hubbly lump of ice, Skipper?"

"Devil! no, but a dory coated with ice. And a dory means men, or ought to. Frozen? Ay, may be. But no. No, no-no! they're alive! See 'em now?"

"God! yes, alongside the dory—hauling it over the floe. Must've got caught out."

"That's it. And out all last night, that's sure. And a blessed cold night for men to've been out on an ice-floe. Oh, on deck! Never mind tacking

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now. Swing her off half a point and let her go into it."

Under the bow and bottom of the *Arbiter* crowded the young ice as toward the floe she bore. Drawing nearer, it packed yet more thickly about her hull, and the more thickly the ice gathered, the more slowly did she make sail, until from flying in free water, like a gull for home, she was now moving sluggishly as a poled punt on inland waters.

Presently the mounting light of the sun disclosed the little schooner from which the castaways were fleeing. Sam recognized the type at once. "A Newf'undlander, that's sure, skipper "

"Ay, and a Bay of Islands craft, too, Sammie."

"Bay of Islands," repeated Gillis. "If the traders and politicians only had their way with American vessels there, Skipper—wouldn't it be queer now? Skipper—" but Captain Clancy, the impatient, was sliding to the deck.

"Drive her into it," he ordered the man at the wheel.

There came the time when the *Arbiter* could barely forge ahead, whereupon rose a murmur that she was standing on too long.

"Charity begins at home," growled one particular dissenter.

"True enough, but no need to end it there,"

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retorted the master, and repeating the inflexible order. "Keep her to it!" to it she was kept.

Shortly came the warning from aloft: "Head-ing us off every minute to the south'ard, Skipper."

The master nodded, but his expression was not reassuring to the weak-hearted ones.

"Can we get 'em aboard and get away, Skipper, too?"

"Hard telling."

"And it may mean floatin' around here for the Lord knows how long—till spring, maybe."

"Spring?" A faint smile parted his lips. "A damn late spring, boy—long past any Easter resurrection."

"Oh, Skipper!" Leary was hanging far out from his perch aloft. "Do you know who that gang is? They're off the *Araminta*—Lackford owns part of her."

The crew took up Sam's hail. Lackford? Of all the men they begrudged doing a good turn—had they come in here to get Lackford's gang, maybe to get lost themselves? and put it to the master, lest in his preoccupation he might forget. "Why, 'twas him, Skipper, would sink us to our moorings an' he could."

The master was not altogether buried in abstraction. Like a bolt he thundered: "Oh, get to hell out of here! What odds is that now?"

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Exhausted, frost-bitten, worn to the last extremity, the crew of the *Araminta* were dragged aboard. A pitiful sight! With hands and faces burned by the frost and eyes that were shrunk to pin-points from long-gazing at the glaring ice, they leaned wearily against the rigging, masts, across the house, wherever they could find support.

The master cheered them up. "A good rubbing of ice on your ears, hands, and faces before they can mortify, a mug of hot coffee and a good sleep afterwards, and you'll forget all that," and after seeing to it that they were taken below, headed the *Arbiter* for the open water again.

With the wind behind her the vessel now made fairly rapid work of it, despite the hindrance of the slob-ice, which to their anxious eyes seemed to mark the sea half-way to the coast of Newfoundland. That same rugged coast-line lifting above the horizon, as they doubled back, was a tempting sight to many, since they had seen what had happened to hardy men after just one cold night astray on the ice!

"And we might do a lot worse than to run back into the same Bay of Islands we just left and hang up there till next spring." Gillis suggested this to Leary.

"Sh-h—" Leary ducked his head toward the skipper.

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But Clancy had heard. "No, I'm damned if I do. We were sent here to revive the rights of the American fishermen under the treaty of 1818, to come here and take away all the herring she can net, seine, or hook. More or less trouble, to be sure, there was; but trouble that won't likely be repeated another year. A lawyer might say, on matter what happens now, we've won our point; but there's more than that. We got to get the load home. We go back there to Bay of Islands and let the herring rot in our hold, and what 'll happen? 'They didn't do it,' they'll all say of us there in the bay, and we'll be an object-lesson, an example of American failure, for a year again; and maybe 'twould result in a new treaty being put through on us. More than that, we go back there and the owner will lose money. And the owner's got to be considered. We fail and he's out a lot. We win and he's in a good haul. We got to win out. But"—he turned to the crew—"for all you're shipped and bound, I want no man to think he's throwing his life away. There's the seine-boat and a sail, and full leave to go. It's moderatin' inshore, smooth water under the lee of the ice now, and the wind that's against us to get home is fair as c'n be for a run into the bay. Now's your chance—your last chance—no more harbor between here and Cape Ray. Who's going?"

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Silence reigned, till Leary spoke. "I don't cal'late anybody's hankerin' to quit, Skipper? Are you, Gillis?"

"Me? Why, Sammie!"

"Or you?"

"No, not me!"

"Nor me—nor me!" followed the chorus of quick disclaimers.

"Well, then"—the master spoke here—"we're off—to see what we c'n do for ourselves now."

The *Arbiter* was a notably weatherly vessel, even among a fleet noted for weatherly qualities. In free water she would have winged her way to windward like a skirling gull; but here was no free water. Only by merciless thrashing of sail and sea, by pitiless driving on the master's part, had she managed by this, late afternoon of the day after the rescue, to squeeze abeam of St. George; and St. George was less than half-way, with the really uncertain waters yet before them. No knowing how far inshore the ice to the southward had drifted.

And it was still drifting; and growing colder; and, in the opinion of everybody, the coldest night of all that was before them, for already the congealing sea, where it lay in little ponds of water among the scattered cakes, was taking on a whiten-

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ing film, through which the vessel cleft her way with a noise as of a pair of scissors tearing through starched cloth. Not yet enough to check her, but in the increasing coldness—and surely when night was come and the benignant sun no longer mellowed, 'twould be cold indeed—this scum would thicken so rapidly that nowhere would there be left a way of escape for the vessel. So, at least, decided the crew, albeit through all their periods of doubt and inquiry they retained full faith in their leader. “This man, he’s never lost us yet,” was their boast to the rescued men.

Under the light of the moon—a dim, yellow, scared-looking moon which set early that evening—they saw the vessel come to a full stop, and that despite everything on her drawing full and a gale of wind sweeping down with a wail as of a multitude of banshees across the dotted seas. Later that night they could feel the ice crowding about the vessel. The rescued men, who alone were resting, could plainly hear it grinding against her planking as they lay in the bunks below. “Like it began when our schooner was caught,” they declared to Clancy, who, however, did not encourage them to gossip over it.

A night of suspense altogether, and still gray in the east when Clancy went aloft for signs. Everywhere ice. To the east the small ice, to

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west and north the great sheets. Far away, southward, was open water, but even that clear space the drifting floes promised soon to claim. But hold—here and there in the dawn the master descried lakes of water. “If I could only get her started among them once, I’d make her hop over the places between,” he muttered. Some further pondering and he passed the word to hang the dory from the bowsprit and for the men to get into it.

Under the concentrated weight, the men jumping up and down in unison, the ice gave way. Hauling the dory ahead, they repeated that over and over, breaking out thus a clogged channel, through which in the strong breeze the master forced a passage for the vessel. After a hundred repetitions came a hurrah of success. “Clear water!” they hallooed. “No telling how far, but clear water, Skipper,” and came tumbling in over the knightheads.

With sheets off, Clancy let her have her head, and she, the able *Arbiter*, increasing her speed with every foot of water left behind, went bowling toward the edge of the next floe beyond.

The *Arbiter* was one of the latest of the McManus models, a true American development, with forefoot well cut away. “You couldn’t do it with every vessel,” explained Clancy. “But with this one—!”

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Cr-r-wh! up and on to the ice hopped the *Arbiter*, not cutting knife-like into it as the crew had expected, but riding over it, as if she would stand up on her stern-post and topple over. But no toppling over for her; before she came to that the weight of her hull and cargo told, and through the steel-gray stuff she went crashing.

Again with the wind behind her she went at it, and again she rode over it and down—cr-r-a-a-ck. The noise of them! And a s-p-plas-h! Magnificently the broken cakes fell away to either side, while all about her, from between the ragged edges up through the gaping seams, squished the cold green sea.

“Shootin’ the chutes!”

“Or roller-coastin’!”

“Man! but ’twould be the greatest fun alive, if only a fellow could be sure of pulling through at last,” observed Gillis. A garrulous lad, Gillis.

The severed cakes were bowling ahead and abeam, the cold brine was spouting far across the frozen surface. “Now we got her started, maybe we c’n keep her going,” said Clancy, and, lashed to the masthead that he might not be shaken off, he picked out the open spots for her, till night came, when they worked by instinct, ploughing along slowly, praying the fates to keep

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them clear of any pocket from which men might not work a vessel out.

Once more the unrolling dawn disclosed solid ice as far as the eye could span. Doomed they certainly were if something did not happen soon. "We got to get out of here." Clancy searched the crawling, frozen plain for signs of hope. There *was* clear water, but like a maddening mirage it lay, with ice now so compact that no human load they could crowd into a dory would break it down; and no chance to drive the vessel on to it.

And yet—what was the good of having ideas and not trying to work them out?—he sent some of the crew to creep out on the ice, cut a hole, and therein set the foretopmast, which he unslung for the purpose. The spar was made fast to the chain cable, which inboard was connected with the windlass.

"Chop the ice away now to give her a start, and then heave away."

To force the vessel through that flinty ice called for the most unwavering effort of all hands. These men were accustomed to furious exertions, but heretofore for comparatively short periods only, two or three or four hours at a time, and always followed by a sweet spell of rest. But this up-and-down sawing! There was something of play to hauling a trawl, under-running nets, or

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rowing a dory, or hoisting a sail; in any of that work was a certain measure of rhythm that all strong men enjoy. A fellow might swing in time to any of that, and there was always the opportunity at that to toss arms and shoulders about now and again. But this being cooped and jammed in the bow of the vessel and sawing away, up and down, up and down, and never so much as to feel the deck heave under a man's feet, why, that was what a man might call hard work.

"Galley-slaves," some one suggested.

"Galley-slaves!" snorted Leary. "Never did those loafers have to face anything like this. They had only to sit side by side, nice and sociable, and pull on a long oar in lovely weather, with the warm spiced winds of the Mediterranean Sea being wafted—yes, wafted, I said—through the open ports. Don't tell me! I've read of them, and I've been in the Mediterranean. While here"—he waved a rampart arm—"here 'tis blasts of frozen air from a frozen pole to cut like razor-edges."

"Ay, and fresh honed after every blast, those same razors."

"Razors? No, but saws—saws with good, able teeth in 'em."

"And claws."

"That's it, claws. And eye-teeth like condemned ice-dogs."

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“Ay, the whelps’ sons!”

However, even that had an ending, and, clear of that last floe began what they hoped would be the last tack of the most dangerous winter passage that men in sailing craft attempt in all the world, ’tis said. For the west coast of Newfoundland is a cruel coast, sheer cliff, with never an inlet for a vessel in distress to run for between St. George and Cape Ray. Not that they had a mind to run for any harbor. They were at one with the master in that. “It’s home we want to get,” he bit out, and sent the *Arbiter* along the edge of the fate-driven floe. “No leeway,” was his standing command; “grab every foot of water off-shore. By and by we’ll need it all.”

In the discouraging hours there were those who had declared that they cared not whether they lived or died. But not so now, when hope was rosy. There was young Gillis. “We’ll make it, after all, don’t you think, Sammie?” he inquired of Leary.

“You’re the damnedest man for asking foolish questions. How do I know any more than you? Shut up! You know about how far we have to go, how the ice’s been driftin’, and what the vessel c’n do in this breeze.”

Leary’s temper betrayed his own doubt. Would they make it? Would they? Could——

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“Well, I’m damned!” came softly, almost humorously, from the master.

Only Leary, standing nearest, heard it. He looked, and in a moment saw for himself. No larger than a cart-wheel it was then, whirling with increasing pace, as might a ball down a hill. Leary experimentally inhaled the dampening air, one breath, another, paused meditatively. “Blast it!” he exploded.

By now the crew were awake to this new menace which had taken shape much like a cloud above a powder explosion, and grown as mysteriously, out of itself as it were, much as a flame fed by gas, but opaque and settling down on them calmly, silently, irresistibly, as if it were the sky itself which was dropping, with immense convoluting billows of vapor foreshadowing. Billows? If they were only real billows of the sea which, rolling down and attempting to overpower, and meeting an able vessel and a ready crew, would have to pass on futilely roaring—but these stayed with them!

It was like black night. Farther than their arms could touch they could not see. Their positions around deck were bespoke by their voices, which resounded curiously, as if they were in different rooms of a building and attempting to carry on conversations through undefined but effective partitions. In their first surprise they

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yelled unnecessarily loud—all but the master. Slowly, evenly, his tones vibrating for the moment with no more disturbing emotion than surprise, the comforting voice floated out: “What do you think of that now? A while ago I’d ’ve laid even money on our chances.”

“And now, Skipper, it’s long odds against us?”

They waited for the answer, facing toward the spot where they had last seen him standing. It came, after a pause, in judicial tones, as of one advising them. “Well, no, I wouldn’t say that. With a vessel like this one under us and a gang that ’ll never quit, as I know none of you will, the odds ’d never be against us.”

But all nerves were not under such control. One, in his dread, had to cry out, and curiously, like a despairing voice from beyond a wall, it sounded: “And yet blast it, I say, for a black smoke from hell; and blast the devils that brought it!”

For overwrought emotions the master’s charity was always large. Well he knew that when men get that way the strongest of them are sometimes like children, and so now he reproved but mildly: “Hush! From hell or heaven, we’ll give it battle. It can’t last forever; coming as it did, it can’t.”

Elbows touching and heads near, bodies close

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but thoughts far apart, Leary and Gillis leaned over the rail. Unseen by human eyes, but roaring to the winds, the swash swept by beneath them. Above it Leary hung impassive. Not so Gillis. He squirmed nervously. Too young he for philosophic calm. He sought to pierce the void; but to no avail. It was like looking at a curtain of black velvet. A curious new dread began to take hold of him.

Booms ratching, sails straining, blocks creaking, halliards moaning, wind wailing, spray splashing, somewhere above a sun shining and yet not to be seen. Ice to one side—he could hear the sound of that, too, whenever the side of vessel, held closer than usual by the skipper's iron hand, rasped the edge of the floe; ice to one side, the eternal cliffs to the other, and the vessel tearing along like a black-swathed ghost—Lord in heaven, what would happen!

What could happen? Gillis had to speak, if no more than to hear the sound of somebody else's voice to reassure him he wasn't dead, serving out his penance somewhere in a seaman's purgatory. He simply had to speak. He was no iron-nerved Clancy or widely experienced Leary. If they were to feel the vessel leaping, leaving the earth itself, shooting off into space somewhere, they would but grin, and brace their legs and wait for her to fetch up, wher-

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ever 'twould but she'd fetch up. He laid an almost timid hand on Leary's arm.

"Sammie, suppose the skipper's out in his reck-onin', what then? A wonderful man altogether, but it's four days since we left the Bay of Islands, and not a chance for an observation since. And the forty zigzag courses we've steered since then, with no mortal man able to say what her speed was at times! And who could figure a vessel's speed and drift in the ice, anyway? 'Tisn't navigation alone, Sammie, that question. A whole collegeful of scientific sharps, a whole bunch of 'em figurin' and pokin' their instruments to the sky at one time, couldn't get it right."

Leary came slowly out of his reverie. "No, Gillie, they couldn't. There'd be nobody so helpless as them same scientific sharps on a passage like this, if the whole outfit of 'em weren't froze stiff, or dead from want of sleep afore this. Only a man that's born to the sea and that's lived all his life on it, that knows it like he knows his own soul, and with that know all that comes out of the sea, tides and wind and ice, and just now the queer workings of this particular gulf—only such a man, that knows what no book 'll ever teach, nor, Gillie, what no other man can ever teach him, that knows things about the ocean that he doesn't know he knows, c'n save us. And that's this man, Gillie.

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No log, no chart, no sights, but no fear, he knows where she is, and he said this vapor'd lift in time to give us a chance; and since he says so, it will."

"But suppose he slips up, or the vessel slips up, and we don't make it, what then?"

"Why, then, after waitin' long enough to make sure it's true, they'll put us in the papers, and that's when you'll hear the good of yourself; and when the likes of you and me hear good of ourselves in the papers, Gillie, we can be sure that it's our 'bituaries we're reading. And—but 'sh-h—listen—" Leary squeezed the younger man's arm. "Sh-h— Wait—Hear it?"

Gillis did hear it, the surge of the sea against the invisible cliffs, and peered out apprehensively; and drew quick breaths—"M-m, m-m—but it's damn handy to—under our lee, that shore, Sammie!"

Leary nodded.

"And she's rushin' on, Sammie—Lord in heaven but she's rushin' on—hah, Sammie?"

Leary nodded.

"And where to, Sammie—where to?"

"God! Gillie, how do I know?—to whatever 'tis is waitin' for her, I s'pose."

"And to le'ward, too—Lord in heaven, Sammie!"

And what was waiting for her? And what was waiting for him? Gillis peered anew at his mate, but Leary had relapsed to his former attitude;

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chin on hands and elbows on rail, that fateful adventurer was gazing impassably out into the dark.

Gillis sighed impotently. And so a man could—at Sam's age. A fine old age, Sammie's. A man could have lived a lot at thirty-five, but what did a man know of life at twenty-two? And yet Gillis smiled even in his despair—he'd had his great days too. Back in Bay of Islands was a girl, but let her pass. In Gloucester was a girl, a better girl—so much better that he used to lower his eyes, for all he wanted to look at her, when she passed. And she didn't know; and if she did, it wouldn't matter. Something better than a hand in a fishing-vessel for her. That was the trouble: if only the good women would make allowances; but they didn't. And, after all—with another sign Gillis admitted it—they were right. A woman that married an offshore fisherman was a fool. No; good women were not for the likes of him, no more than him for good women. And so he'd taken up with the other kind. And that girl in Bay of Islands—'twas of her they sang:

“I know a girl in Calinore,
Vessels sail right by her door;
She has sweethearts by the score,
Never a lock on her front door!”

And the whole fleet would laugh when her name

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was mentioned. But let that pass. She had a kind word and a warm heart, and she'd kissed him leaving, and said, "Take good care of yourself, b'y."

But if no good woman—and, after all, women weren't the whole of a man's life—there'd be good men left to say a word for him. If 'twould be no more than a word on the corner some windy day, when, with heads down, a couple of old shipmates bumped into each other passing. "So the *Arbiter's* lost," one would say. "Ay, and did you know any of 'em?" "Ay, I did," the first one would say then. "There was—" and maybe his name would be mentioned, with a good word, too. Or maybe 'twould be when a couple of his old chums would meet in some bar-room and, filling their glasses, one would say, "Well, that was tough on young Gillis, warn't it?—went down on the *Arbiter*." "Yes," the other might say, "damn tough." And the first one then, raising his glass, would say softly, "Well, God rest his soul, here's to him." Or better yet—the tears were starting in Gillis's eyes—perhaps 'twould be some bad night, in the forc's'le of some vessel on the fishing-grounds, on the Western Banks or on Flemish Cap, or wherever it was, maybe 'twould be his old dorymate, Alec Corning—next to Leary the man he liked best. Maybe Alec, coming off watch,

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after hauling off his boots and oilskins, would draw out his pipe for a little drag afore he turned in, and maybe after he'd got lighted up and everything drawing—himself setting back on the lockers fine and comfortable—he'd remember and say—or maybe somebody lying in a bunk, not yet asleep, or the cook, nearly always awake, would bring up his name, and Alec would say: "Ay, lost with Tommie Clancy in the *Arbiter*. And too bad, too. I knew him well. A good man was Arthur Gillis. I mind we were dory-mates once." And maybe Alec would go on: "Fishin' off Sable Island, we were once, off the No'theast Bar, in the *Buccaneer* with Crump Taylor, and our dory was capsized. It looked bad, I tell you. Six hours we hung on, and"—here maybe Alec would stretch the truth a bit for the sake of his old chum—"never a whimper out of him; a young fellow, too; never a word of fear till the vessel bore down and got us. And maybe——"

A hand shook him. Leary's voice said something. Gillis looked about. What was that?—and what here—men's forms moving around deck? He looked about. The black vapor was thinning to a dirty brown.

Leary poked him again. "Didn't the skipper say it would? Look!" he roared; and Gillis, looking, saw with joy what at another time would

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have chilled his blood. From out of the haze on their port bow was staring a wall of gray rock.

The master swung her away in time, and the danger that might have ended their lives for them was forgotten the moment after. They were grateful for the sight of that particular cliff. It served as a landmark, told them where they were. Cape Ray was two miles away. "Nothing off," ordered the master, and the *Arbiter* was headed a hair-line nearer the ice. And so she flew on, giving way only as the edge of the relentless ice-floe forced her.

A mile now, a terribly long mile, and yet the *Arbiter* was flying. Never probably had she carried her rail through water so smoothly. Three-quarters, half a mile. Shortening surely, but also the gap was narrowing, and time was whitening with age as they watched. They gathered in groups and gambled mentally on it, knowing well the stake in the gamble. Home, wife, and children—life—if they won out; a booming surf, a vessel's timbers crunching on the sharp-pointed rocks—and they didn't need to be too fine-pointed, either, to do the job—themselves crushed, beaten, their people at home probably not knowing it for weeks, if they lost!

Would it be called two cable-lengths now? W-w-well, yes, two lengths—hardly more than

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that. But that gap ahead had shrunk till the space seemed no wider than the vessel's deck. A narrow gauntlet for sixteen lives to run!

A narrow lane ahead now, no more than a flumelike slit of water between ice and rocks. And down that roaring flume the *Arbiter* leaped. Already detached pieces of ice were drifting across the path, catching and breaking in the jagged points of the rocks at the base of the cliffs. Stray pieces of hard ice were knocking furiously against the *Arbiter's* planking, against even her lee, the shore, side.

They were in doubt as to one particular object that lay exactly in their course. Was it a piece of white rock or partially submerged ice? There was no room to turn out. Rock or ice, they would have to take it. If it was loose ice, well and good; if a rock, well——

"Let her go for it!" It was Leary to the wheel, and the master in the fore-rigging. Leary's breath was coming in gulps. His eyes were shining. "Christ! but I call this racing!"

"Racing sure enough, Sammie, and more than money or a cup depending."

The *Arbiter* leaped for the doubtful obstruction under her bow. Cr-r-r-u-unch!

"Ice!"

"No—rock!"

The Ice-Dogs

“No—ice, by the Lord!”

A lump of ice it was; and on swept the *Arbiter*, with now the dreaded headland abeam. On, on it was under her quarter. “Go it, you jade—you beauty—go it!” One more long, lo-o-n-g breath and it was under her stern.

They looked back, but no longer was a lane there. The way by which they had come was bridged over by a crunching mass of flinty ice, which was tossed tumultuously as it came, and, reaching shore, piled with tremendous concussions against the sides of the granite cliffs.

“Skipper”—from one who had been looking over the bow—“d’y’ know but the protection plankin’ on her stem’s all chewed up—looks like a layer of shredded pine, Skipper.”

“So? Like some kind o’ breakfast-food, heh? Well”—he dropped from rail to deck, and below, aloft, outboard he gazed—“well”—this slowly—“a good vessel, and needed all her oak plankin’. Ay, a good vessel,” and, hesitatingly, as if it might be construed to mean self-praise, “and a good job.”

“A *damn* good job,” affirmed Leary.

But it was Gillis who leaped an ecstatic yard into the air and, cracking his heels, emitted: “Ain’t we the dogs, though? Hah, what, ain’t we? No ’bituary notices for us this time, hah, Sammie?”

The Ice-Dogs

“And now”—the master turned to the rescued Newfoundlanders—“we’ll run into Port-aux-Basques and land you. And when you get back to Bay of Islands you c’n pass the word that we did clear the ice, and then—” He halted for sheer weariness.

“And then, Skipper?”

“And then—” Interminable watches had driven Clancy’s eyes far back into their sockets, but the unquenchable light, if smouldering, was there, and now that light flashed out like a flame from cavernous depths. “Then”—but the voice broke and he could only whisper it huskily—“home!” The last trace of the iron manner faded with the thought, and over his face came a smile as soft as a bread-and-buttered baby’s. “Home, boy, home!” and with it caught the capering Gillis a playful clout that sent him from break to house.

They landed the castaways; and thereafter it was no more than wind, frost, sleet, hail, heavy seas, smothered decks, and groaning gear—incidental hindrances to the passage of a hard-driven vessel from Newfoundland to Gloucester in winter-time.

THE AMERICANIZATION OF
ROLL-DOWN JOE

The Americanization of Roll-Down Joe

THE latest development of the American fishing schooner came smartly to anchor in mid-stream.

From his perch in Crow's Nest, a cable-length abeam of the vessel, but mast-head high in the air, old Peter looked down on her with wonder and respect commingled. "The biggest mains'l ever swept past the Point! Look at the spread of it! Isn't that an ungodly armful to have to gather up on a jumping deck in a gale o' wind? Eighty-four-foot boom and fifty-two-foot gaff! You could sweep all the waters of the earth with all the search-lights of heaven and never a schooner of her tonnage would you find swingin' such a sail. And if you could find one, where but among American fishermen would you find a man would go outside a harbor in so much as a summer gale with that boom and that sail above it to be layin' out to looard of their rail?"

"But this man, Peter—he'll carry it?"

"Till all's blue. Eighty-four-foot boom! And I mind when they used to boast of their sixty-

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foot booms, and now the storm try's'ls of this one I expect'll lace to most that len'th."

"Portugee, ain't he, Peter?"

"Portugee-born," amended Peter, "but a good American citizen now."

"But isn't that surprising, Peter, his having the best out?"

"Surprisin'!" retorted Peter. "Meanin' because he's Portugee? H-m-m. A sensible remark, that, when so far's any of us can learn this man's ancestors were sailormen—navigators and world-explorers—and a good many other things when your forefathers, or mine maybe, were tryin' to get up courage to visit the neighborin' mainland."

"But people new to this country."

"New people!" snorted Peter. "Man alive, where'd we be but for the new people? It's they puts the life into us. While the descendants of the old settlers are leanin' back in easy-chairs, brains and bodies all used up, not an original notion left in 'em—from overwork, or overworry, or too much fat livin', or whatever 'tis that's ailin' them—it's the new people are coming along and gettin' things goin' again. Look right here in Gloucester now—is it the new blood, or the old, that's mannin' the fleet? And this same Roll-Down Joe—this Portugee immigrant, as they call

of Roll-Down Joe

him—industrious, upright, sober, intelligent—as are all but damn few of his kind that ever I see—he’s standin’ simply for one of the dozen big nations that’s made us what we are or will make us what we’re to be.”

“But how’d he get the name, Peter? Must be some story back of a name like that.”

“It was while Joe was still but little known in Gloucester,” began Peter, “but not so green that he hadn’t managed to absorb a good many of the leadin’ principles of the fishin’ fleet, that him and Wesley Marrs were racin’ home from the Western Banks one time, and after sixty hours of it Joe thought he needed a kink of sleep. So he started to go below, when the man to the wheel stopped him. It was blowin’ hard then, the *Isabella* rollin’ down pretty well under it. ‘S’pose it gets worse while you’re below, Skipper, what’ll I do?’ asks the man to the wheel.

“‘What you do? Why, keep her goin’,’ says Joe. ‘Keep da *Isabell* goin’, sure.’

“‘But how long, Skipper? There’s a limit to everything—how long?’

“Joe studied a minute, then made a chalk line on the deck well up to wind’a’d of the wheel-box. ‘When she roll down to there, call me,’ says Joe, and went below.

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“‘Cripes!’ says the man to the wheel; ‘when she rolls down to there, do you think you’ll care whether you’re called or not?’

“Well, I was the man to the wheel that time, and when I got to Gloucester I told the story, and ever since then they’ve called him Roll-Down Joe. He cert’nly promised even then to carry sail with the best of them. And then he’d been in the country such a short time that the master’s papers had to be taken out in the name of one of his crew—who again happened to be me.

“Well, ’twarn’t long before everybody began to take notice of Joe. Or most everybody, rather, because there’s always those who can never be brought to like those whose ways are different from their own. But the best people liked him. And you couldn’t help it—he was so eager to win your good-will and he set such store by what you said, you couldn’t help but like him. I don’t know but what most people of the South seem to be like that, don’t they—want you to love ’em whatever else you do. There was nothing this man wouldn’t do to please you. Nat’rally the killers began to take to him, and nat’rally, too, what they said was law to Joe. That was about the time when nothing ’d do the killers but Oregon pine spars. Joe’s were Georgia pine. ‘What you want, Joe, is Oregon pine sticks,’ says Wesley Marrs to

of Roll-Down Joe

him one day, and went on to explain what beautiful implements his own were.

“Joe grew excited. ‘I get dem,’ he says. ‘How mooch they costa—what? Fi’ hundred dollar? No matt’, I get dem,’ says Joe. ‘Fi’ hundred, one t’ousand—no matt’, I get dem. I wanta da ver’ best.’

“‘That’s right, Joe—the best is none too good for you and me,’ says Wesley; ‘but don’t go throwing away any five hundred dollars foolish. Wait some day till you’re out to sea and consult your almanac, Joe, and when them zodiac signs indicate a good breeze o’ wind and a handy harbor, in conjunction, then do you slap everything you got to her, and—who knows?—it may be your lucky day, and maybe them spars ’ll just nach’ally sag over the side o’ themselves,’ advises Wesley.

“Joe looked puzzled.

“‘The insurance company ’ll have to pay for ’em then,’ explains Wesley.

“‘Ah-h, da American way! Ver’ good, ver’ good,’ shouted Joe, and a week later, in a howlin’ gale of wind, he sailed the *Isabella* back and forth off Halifax tryin’ to lift the masts out of her. But they were fine stout sticks and though they buckled like umbrella ribs they just wouldn’t come out, so Joe went on the east’ard with the old sticks. But when next he met Wesley he apolo-

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gized for not doing better. 'May-bee ten ton more bal-last and a leet' more win' next time an' I do eet,' he said to Wesley.

"Well, Joe, bringin' home the fish reg'larly as he did, was makin' a name for himself among the fishermen. And doin' his best to live up to it, too. 'Twarn't long before he got to where he shifted his drink from port wine to whiskey, and could smoke fifteen-cent cigars on the curb-stone like any American-born. Along about there he came to me one day and said, 'Peter, I moost be one ceet-zen, one American ceet-zen.' So I steered him up to City Hall, up to the proper grating in the proper room where was a clerk, who, after he'd finished puttin' just the exact point on his pencil and had manicured his nails once or twice again—and it didn't take him any longer to do it than it would take an average trawler to bait a six-line string of gear—he has time for us. I explained what Joe was after and Joe told his name, a good old Portuguese name, too; but it didn't seem to hit the fancy of this lad in the cage.

"Do you expect me to spell or pronounce a name like that? Wonder you wouldn't take some good local name.'

"Joe was a bit cast down—he had a bit of sentiment about his name. But he was bound to be an American citizen, and thought if change of

of Roll-Down Joe

name was part of it, why he'd change his name. So he tried to think of a good American name and, recollectin' some of his skipper friends, 'Ah-h, yess, yess—O'Don-nell, Tom O'Don-nell,' he says.

"'W-r-r-h,' says the clerk. 'Look out the window at those signs across the street.'

"Joe looked, with an eye all the time for the fine big letters, and picked out the biggest sign in sight. It read:

BURNHAM COAL AND WOOD

The Burnham part of it was only of moderate size, while the 'Coal and Wood' was in six-foot letters up and down so you couldn't go astray. The coal part, happenin' to be to wind'ard, Joe picked that out for his, and, after carefully copyin' it onto a piece of paper like a sign-painter, brought it to the clerk. 'One good American name, hah?' he says.

"'That's better,' says the clerk, who, by the way, warn't throwin' any dazzlin' reflections from any partic'larly bright side of his intelligence. 'But a wonder you wouldn't spell it right,' says he. 'C-o-l-e it should be,' and made out a paper for Joseph Cole, native of St. Michaels, Azores Islands, Portugal, and——"

Peter, happening to glance out to where the

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talkative, gesticulating, but active and efficient dark-bearded men were putting the great mainsail in stops, came to a pause. Presently, his eyes twinkling, he resumed: "And I s'pose that a couple of hundred years from now the genealogy sharks will be diggin' up a fine Anglo-Saxon pedigree for Joe's descendants, if it happens they want to get into one of those Who's Who societies we read about in the papers, as all the time guaranteein' which is the sure-enough thing. Joe's descendants—and they'll probably be numerous, for he's got seven children of his own already—they'll probably discover some day that they're descended from some fine old Northumberland family, so named because of the coal-mining properties they owned, or maybe the pedigree experts will tell them they were so named because of their dark complexions.

"Well, Joe kept comin'. I saw him one night playin' duplicate whist in the Master Mariners' rooms, and he most burstin' with the things he wanted to say but couldn't, because some good friends told him 'twas against the rules to talk while you were playing whist, though everybody was talkin' around him. Says I, that's sure the finishin' touch. But it warn't. He didn't put on the last little rag polish to his Americanization till about the time he was expectin' his final natur-

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alization papers, the papers that'd give him the right to vote. He was haddockin' in South Channel then, market-fishin' into Boston. And that's the devil's own fishin', let me tell you—night and day, rain or shine, till you fill her up—with those old-country fishermen, Dungarven, Claddagh and Kincaid men to set the pace. You need to be an iron man to stand it. And their everlastin' racin' to market! For whoever hits the Boston market right in haddockin' he's sure the boy that shares big, and blessed little if you don't hit it right, for those Boston dealers they cert'nly want it all.

“So the competition there is pretty keen, as you know, and nobody was any keener than Joe Cole to hold his own. We'd been hove-to under our fores'l for eight days waitin' for it to moderate so's we could get a chance to fish. A Tuesday morning that was, and not a vessel in the fleet, we felt sure, had a pound of fish in her hold. But such fishin' when he did shove the dories over! They must have been fair starved out down below, waitin' with their mouths open, and just over the right spot we must have been, for it was a fish to every hook. Next morning at five o'clock there was sixty thousand of fish iced below or ready to dress on deck. ‘Sweeng her off,’ says Joe, ‘an’ we mak’ da market dees aft’noon.’ ’Twas in Lent, and Joe could hardly hold himself when he

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thought of it. 'We ketcha da market dry,' says Joe, 'mak' plenta mon-ee dees trip, you see.'

"And the scheme did look good. It didn't seem possible that any vessel could have loaded up as fast as we did, and if we could get home that day, which seemed likely—a great sailin' breeze, with no more than a hundred and thirty-odd miles to the dock and twelve hours to do it in—it looked good. And of course if it *was* a fish famine after that long spell of bad weather, we cert'nly were in for a big share.

"So off we went, across the channel and up by Cape Cod in good shape. And with the wind making all the time, we straightened out for a run across the bay in fine spirits. Nothing, we thought then, could stop her from gettin' to T wharf, with hours to spare, nothing short of dismastin', and they bein' those same good old Georgia pine sticks that Joe had tried so hard to carry away off Halifax, we had no fear of that.

"We were belting along then, not ten miles from the lightship, the vessel hikin' everlastin'ly and the gang already spendin' their money—a couple up to the Boston Theatre; another looking over the bank-book with his wife—who'd just come back from depositin' forty dollars in the savings-bank, and that made three hundred and twenty-nine dollars and fourteen cents, not count-

of Roll-Down Joe

in' interest due but not yet entered; another chap was being measured for a nine-dollar pair o' pants, the only thing worryin' him was would he have a blue seam—when came a squall that struck us fair. Over she went, with most of her deck under water. And stayed there for a while. But she was all right, she didn't quite capsize; only when she did come up we had to break out her topside plankin' with hand-spikes, so's the water could run off her deck before we could get her goin' again.

“And that would 've been all right, only away up to wind'ard ten miles or more—we could just make her out—was a three-masted schooner hove-down. Only different from us, she showed no signs of coming up. Well, there was nothing to it but go up to her. And maybe Joe didn't look back longin'ly at the lightship when we wore 'round.

“It must have taken us two hours to beat up—not much sea, but wind somethin' desp'rate—and when we got alongside we had to be everlastin'ly careful in takin' them off, and particularly careful with one gent, a passenger, who turned out to be her owner. He'd been takin' a cruise along the coast in this vessel of his. A big, fine-lookin', rosy chap, though not too rosy when we took him off; but a pretty decent kind, except

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that when he got his courage back he developed into one of those patronizin' kind that get on your nerves, the kind that look you over and think because you hustle for a livin' you must have lost any nat'ral intelligence you ever had, if ever you had any. You know—one of those 'my good man' kind of chaps.

"'I'll do something handsome for you, you'll see,' he says to Joe. This was after we'd got him dried out and the rosy color came into his face again. And pats Joe on the back, which Joe didn't quite like, comin' from a stranger; but you have to make allowances for a man whose life you've just saved, though just then Joe warn't payin' too much attention to this lad's speeches. Joe was mostly worryin' would he get to T wharf before five o'clock that afternoon or not.

"Well, we didn't get there. The market had been closed ten minutes when we dove into the slip. And you would 'a' had to sympathize with the skipper if you'd seen him sittin' on the cap-log fannin' himself with his sou'wester. He was downcast sure enough. 'Haddock seex centa an' da cod eight centa da poun'. Dees trip good for four t'ousan' dollar if we been in one leet' half hour ago.'

"Knowin' just how he felt, I tried hard to cheer

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him up. 'It may be even higher in the morning, Skipper,' I said. 'If no other vessel comes in it's sure to,' I goes on, 'for with a Friday in Lent ahead of them they got to have the fish to fill the orders. And if it is, Skipper, you'll have a market trip stock that'll go down to posterity.'

"Just to think of it made him smile—if nobody came in during the night!"

Peter stopped short and began to laugh softly. "I have to every time I think of it."

"What was it, Peter—nobody in?"

Peter roared. "Nobody in! Next mornin' there were thirty-five haddockers into the dock. You couldn't see the harbor for masts and trys'ls hung up to dry. And fish! 1,364,589 pounds of fish to the dock that day. I remember the figures well, the record day of that year, and from eight and six cents a pound cod dropped to two and a quarter and haddock to a dollar and a quarter a hundred. Instead of stockin' four thousand we stocked less than nine hundred dollars. Instead of the crew sharing a hundred and fifty or sixty dollars apiece, we shared twenty-six dollars and twenty-three cents apiece for our two weeks of a winter trip.

"Well, you oughter seen Joe. 'Dam!' says he. Dam again all coasta-men that can-not han-del a ves-sel! Dam! T'ree t'ousan' dollar lost for

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one leet' squall! Dam! dam! dam!' in little explosions like a gasoline engine around deck.

"That same afternoon Joe's final papers came to him, and he went up to an Atlantic Avenue hotel with Wesley Marrs and Tom O'Donnell, his two great models, to look them over. They'd hardly gone when the owner he'd rescued from the three-master came down the dock lookin' for the skipper.

"He was rosy as any apple with good humor and impatience, so I brought him up to the hotel. He pounced on Joe. 'Ha, I've found you! I've been up and down the dock looking for you, as this man'—meanin' me—'will tell you. You did me a good turn yesterday—good seamanship and a good spirit displayed. And I know that you must have lost some time in doing it. Now, now. I kept track—three hours or more it must have been, and you shall be reimbursed—paid—and paid well for it.'

"Joe raised his hand, palm out, protestin'. 'No, no. For sav-ving life we can tak' no mon-ee.'

"'Now, now. I did not say this was for saving life.' And the smile of him! You'd think Joe was some three-year old child he was talkin' to. 'No, not for saving life—allow me'—he goes on—'but for the time lost in saving life—for the time lost.'

of Roll-Down Joe

“‘For da time lost in sav-ving life I tak’ no mon-ee,’ repeats Joe.

“‘But you must, Captain. You really must let me have my way. And I will split no hairs over it. You and your men work hard, and your rewards, I know, are not great. Three hours for twenty-four men—how will that do?’ and he held out some bills.

“‘What ees it?’ said Joe.

“‘Why,’ said the rescued chap, ‘American money—a hundred dollars. See, five twenties. Now in the country where you come from——’

“‘Yess,’ interrupted Joe, ‘in da countree where I come from a hund’ed dollar is mooch mon-ee, ver’ mooch. But dere also we tak’ no mon-ee—not for sav-ving life.’

“‘But you must,’ said this chap, and forced the bills into Joe’s hands.

“Joe looked at them as if he had never seen a twenty-dollar bill in his life before. ‘My, such a heap!’ he says after a little study, and held them up for Marrs and O’Donnell to look at, and after they’d had a look he crumpled them up in his fist, and then, straightening them out again and in the most absent-minded way in the world he reached over to the little alcohol lamp at the end of the bar, stuck one of them into the flame, and with it lit his cigar.

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"The passenger jumped a yard into the air. 'My God!' he shrieked, 'what are you doing?'

"'What ees?' says Joe, surprised-like, at the same time stampin' what was left of the bill to ashes under his toe, and only then seemin' to take notice of what he had done. 'Ah, ah. I burn da mon-ee? What a mistak', sooch a mistak', ver' foolish. My brain it ees, what you say? bis-ee But I will mak' a' right,' and diving into his jeans he pulled out a great wad of bills, from which he took a twenty and handed it with the other four bills to the passenger. The passenger drew back.

"'You do not weesh to tak'?' says Joe.

"'It is for you, Captain, and then the men, your crew——'

"'Ah-h, for da crew?' and turned to where I was standing. 'Here, Peter, tak' dis mon-ee, dees fine gentla-man geev, an' buy see-gar, good see-gar, min' you. See-gar—er, no, see-gar-ette for da gang,' and tossed the hundred dollars over to me.

"By this time the passenger was making all kinds of queer faces. 'Have some drink?' asked Joe politely. And the man, kind of dazed still, said he guessed he'd take a little whiskey and soda.

"'P-s-s-t!' said Joe. His mustache curled

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and his earrings almost tinkled. 'Whis-key an' so-da! Dees no gang cheapa sport. Dees here Capta' Tom O'Don-nell, dees Capta' Wesley Marrs.' Then, rapping on the bar, Joe ordered the bartender to bring on a quart of the fizzy stuff, and after that another quart, and on top of that another, and was ordering another—all in a rush—and had spread out on the bar the papers that made him an American citizen, to call the man's attention to them, when he flew out the door. 'Ah-h,' said Joe sadly, 'an' I wanta heem to see dese—what you call heem, dat long word, Tom?'

"'Naturali-zation papers, naturali-zation, and say it slow, Joe.'

"'Ah-h, yess—what eet ees you say, Tom, what geev me vote—dat right?'

"'That's right, Joe, and 'twas treason to keep you waitin'. You ought to been votin' the day you hit the country, Joe.'

"Joe smiled. 'Anny-way, a good ceet-zen now, hah, Tom—a good American ceet-zen Joe Cole now, hah, Wes-ley?'

"'That's what,' says Wesley. 'And the way you tossed that hundred to Peter, Joe, it was nothing less than—how is it they say it in the theatre, Tom?'

"'Soo-per-r-b is the word, Wesley. With a

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gesture of sooperb contimpt, is the words they use.'

"'Ah-h,' said Joe, and reached for the fourth quart. 'We dreenk to one new American ceet-zen, Joe Cole! M-m——' he drew in his breath like a child—'and ah-h, it tak' us to show dem da true American way. Hah, Tom? Ha, Wesley?'"

Peter had risen to mark on the blackboard the names of vessel and master, but, with chalk in air, he paused. "And I say with O'Donnell and Wesley, 'tisn't the len'th of time a man's been in the country that makes a citizen of him. Joe was of more use to the country the first day he set foot on an American dock, of more use than many who'd vote to keep him out, of more use than many that's got ancestral halls and don't see anything right in the country nowadays, but who wouldn't themselves lose a night's sleep or the nail off a finger to make it right. Those others talk; but Joe's kind, whether he's Squarehead or Dutch, Polak or Dago, whatever he is—his is the kind that's always been throwin' a halo round the people and the institutions of the country he adopts. Joe's kind, that don't half the time know whether his country is right or wrong, and don't half the time care, is the kind that since

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nations were nations has gone out and died for the flag that's over them. And made but little fuss about it. And the horizon, you'll take notice, is blotted out with but few monuments to the memory of that kind."

Carefully Peter was writing it down—"Schooner *Bonita*, master Joseph Cole," when—"But, Peter, did you really buy cigars for the money?"

The wrinkles spread from the corner of Peter's mouth till they reached to under his ears. "H-m—well, not for the whole hundred. But let me tell you, boy, what cigars we did smoke that day—they were cert'nly a damn swell brand."

THE HARSH WORD

The Harsh Word

MARTIN CARR had come forward for his usual mug-up before turning in. Piling down after him came his bunk-mate, almost his shadow, little Eddie Foy. "M-m—but it's some cold on deck!" ejaculated Eddie, ere yet his feet hit the forec's'le floor.

"Yes," assented Martin, taking a coffee mug from off a nail in the grub-locker the meanwhile, "yes, a man astray to-night in a dory he'll cert'nly thrash his arms across his breast afore mornin'." And then directing his voice toward the cook, "Louder, boy, louder."

For a New Year's gift somebody had given the cook an advertising calendar, one of those thick pad-like affairs with each date in large numerals on a separate sheet, at the foot of which in small type were various praiseworthy sentiments. It was from these that the cook, in an almost inaudible voice, was reading. As he finished one he would tear it off with a flourish and pass on to the next. Martin, now leisurely pouring the hot coffee from the boiler on the stove, added, "Louder, Charlie, louder. Let's all hear."

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"Ah-h—to hell with 'em!" suddenly exploded the cook. "Look, Martin—you can't have two days runnin' of them, the things worth readin', and gran' sayin's some of them be, when the third day'll come a lot of stuff about their otter-mobiles. People who'd play that on you will make machines, I'll bet, that'd break down just when you was countin' most on 'em—goin' down a steep hill or maybe with a gully a thousand fathom deep to your rail."

"Mind a man of the weather, wouldn't it?" put in Eddie Foy, "which'll come along fair and promisin' for a few days, till you come to put trust in it, and then one day you get caught out——"

"G-g-g—" gasped the cook—"G-g-g—" and took to tearing off the sheets rapidly. "Two, three, four—who the hell wants to hear about their old machines?—nine, ten, e-leven. I s'pose I might's well set it for t'morrer. There—twelve. Feb'uary the twelfth."

"Hah?" Martin, who had seated himself in neighborly fashion on the locker next the cook's bunk, now slewed his body half around to take heed of the cook. "The twelfth, did y' say, Charlie?" and after peering into the bunk to see for himself, said softly. "Sure enough, the twelfth," And yet more softly, gazing abstractedly into his

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but half-consumed mug of coffee while he spoke, "February the twelfth—a year to-morrow," and, turning to his chum, "D'y' mind it, Eddie?"

Eddie looked in puzzlement at Martin, and then, he, too, recollecting, with tender tone answered, "Aye, Martin, so 'tis—a year to-morrow. Poor Bushie!"

There were those to whom the whole truth was not known, and so the story told this winter's night by Martin Carr in the brightness and warmth of the schooner's forec's'le.

"A boy to love was Bushie; but from that very first summer trip he made he did things that'd go to show he was never intended for a fisherman. 'Twasn't alone that matter of the sword-fish. That was when we were single-dory trawling on Le Have, and there was Bushie all by himself, nobody to advise him, when he runs foul of this great creature—just got a peek at him when down he goes, half a tub of trawls tangled up with him, and Lord knows how many fathom down, before Bushie's waked up to it he's hooked anything at all. And then Bushie, poor boy, never any great hand with an oar, sets out to tow him to the vessel two miles against wind and tide—for hours we c'd see him comin', and while he was yet a cable's length away we could hear him hol-

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lerin'. 'The taykle—the taykle!' he kept yellin'. 'What is it?' we called out. 'A sword-fish,' he answers. 'I see the twin fins of him—a monster—all of a thousand pound. A good afternoon's work—sword-fish ten cents a pound when we left home—the taykle! the taykle!' and such pride was there in his face and voice that 'twas a joy just to look and listen to him. And when he come alongside we put the dory tackle to the tangled trawls and begins to hoist, and sure enough, up comes something nigh as long as a dory. But when the gang gets a fair look at what it was!

"'A sword-fish!' says one. 'A sword-fish!' roars another. And the skipper—'He cert'nly looks to weigh a thousand pounds,' says the skipper, 'but we won't stop to weigh him.' And everyone that could grabs a fork or a gaff or a deck-broom and begins to welt that sword-fish over the nose. A sword-fish? No; but as ugly a hammer-headed shark as ever a man laid eyes on, and poor Bushie hadn't a word to say, but stood by with tears 'most in his eyes, while the gang walloped his prize till they were tired.

"Bushie was the kind that took little things like that to heart, and some of 'em poked so much fun at him, especially two chaps, Addicks and Indry, that he didn't follow up that first trip on

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the *Cygnets*. And it was six months or more again before we, or most of us, anyway, saw him again, and then it was plain what was drivin' him. He was starvin', for in the cold weather, d' y' see, there wasn't so much doin' for Bushie around the docks, and so one day he came down to our vessel—he'd heard we were a man short—got his courage up and came down, summer underclothes still on him, to see if he could get a chance on the *Cygnets*. Poor boy, his stomach was bending in for the want of good food, and his teeth were clicking with the cold. Well, he didn't get an over and above average encouragement, everybody knowin' what a poor hand he was in a dory; and there was this Addicks 'specially that couldn't abide him at all. 'H-m,' he says, 'the lad that caught the sword-fish. Give *him* a chance? Why, he's about as much use as a passenger. Maybe he'll get another sword-fish and be roaring, "The taykle! the taykle!" again. "All of a thousand pound; I see the twin fins of him!"' and Addicks starts to roarin', and everybody roars. And yet 'twarn't so black a mark against a green man.

"'Well,' the skipper says, 'what d' y' think, Martin?'" and I said—God forgive me, now, but I meant well—I says, 'Give the poor boy a chance,' and the skipper, a good-hearted man, after a

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while said: 'All right; get your bag and come aboard,' but he jumped aboard as he was. Bag? He didn't have a second shirt to his back. Of course we helped him out—one a shirt, another drawers; here a pair of mitts, and there an oil-skin. But when he was all fitted out he lacked a lot of bein' properly rigged for winter fishin'!

"Now, there was a little something else behind Addicks and Indry's opposition, only it didn't come out till later. This lad, Bushie, you see, had the most takin' way with him. You'd laugh at him and you'd lecture him, but you couldn't help likin' him. The girls, 'specially, took the greatest fancy to him. And that was the case with a couple that Indry and Addicks had been tryin' to get to wind'ard of for a long time. Addicks and Indry 'd be makin' great headway with 'em till Bushie 'd come along, and then 'twould be all off. The girls 'd forget that the other two was in the room at all. And how do I account for that? Well, in the case of Addicks and his partner 'twas easy enough. They were hard as flint, always lookin' for the best of it.

"Well, on the run out to the grounds this trip Bushie he cert'nly won everybody's heart. That's after he got two or three good meals into him. He'd coil up in his bunk of an evenin', about the time everybody 'd be feelin' rested and contented,

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and in the right mood for it, and he'd get out his little harmonica, And man! maybe'd there'd be an easterly swishin' and across-sea poundin', and maybe on deck 'twould he half a foot of snow, and the watch slushin' around in it, wearin' their eyes out tryin' to see into what mortal eyes weren't meant to see into, and maybe we c'd hear 'em call out from one to the other. But Bushie he'd cuddle that little mouth-organ in the palm and fingers of his left hand, and the palm and fingers of his right hand he'd coil around on the outside of them again, like he was afraid somebody was goin' to steal it from him, and he'd curl his lips around the music side of it, and then, his shoulders hunched and his head to one side, he'd begin. And in five minutes you'd forget all about a no'th-easter, another five and you couldn't 'a' said whether you were to sea or in a duck-pond. Five more and you'd be back to home and wife, and if 'twarn't for the oilskins and jackboots hangin' up by the stove to dry, you'd swear you could see the babies rollin' 'round the floor. Yes, sir; and when he wasn't so tired with his day at the trawls and dressin' down afterward—he warn't over-strong, the poor boy, and the work used to tire him out terribly some days—when there was any little let-up so there was a chance to rest up, man, you could see him fattenin' under your eyes, and

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then he'd joke and laugh till, if 'twas at table, you'd most forget to eat. He had a quick eye and brain, y' see, for odd happenings. Maybe that used up his strength same as so much hard work, that brain and eye of his that never rested, but in this life allowance, of course, is seldom made for that.

"Well, winter fishin', no gainsaying it, is hard sometimes, and one day this trip leavin' the vessel it was pretty rough, and—you mind the day, Eddie?"

"I do, Martin; and a damn sight rougher afore we got aboard again."

"It was. And the first man to get aboard that day was Bushie. Before anybody else 'd hauled his first tub this lad Bushie was aboard. 'Twas plain his trouble—the fright of the sea was on him. I've seen it a score o' times and on many a man that made a good fisherman later. Spite of all they say about bein' born to a thing, there's a lot too, in bein' trained to it. And besides the fright in Bushie's case, there was the exhaustion, too, this day. It tried the toughest of us that day. Well, Bushie cut his gear and came aboard. I knew he cut it—I saw him when he did it. And he must've known I saw him, 'cause I was next dory to him, his lines and mine all but fouled. But he knew, I s'pose, that I'd never say anything,

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he and me bein' very friendly; and he was hopin', no doubt, that nobody else 'd find it out. He accounted for coming aboard so early by sayin' he got hung up and parted his gear, and it bein' a rough bottom, too, that would 'a' sounded plausible enough comin' from some men. But this Addicks repeats, 'Parted his gear! and d' y' believe that shrimp had the strength to part a sixteen-pound ground-line?' and rushes up and overhauls the poor boy's tub of trawls, and there, sure enough, finds where it 'd been cut clean with a knife. And he brings what was left of the tub down into the forec's'le, where the first gang was to supper, and shows the mark of the knife. He showed it to you, Eddie?"

"He did."

"And to me; though I made out I was too busy to look. Well, it was a hard thing to have to face across the lighted supper-table, the forec's'le filled with angry men; for, while the gang started out by rather not knowing about it, they warmed up, between Indry and Addicks's talk, by feelin' that they hadn't been treated right. Addicks heaves the tub of trawls through the bulkhead door and into the forehold; and Indry, who was like a thumb to Addicks's fingers, he turns to take it up. 'And this man comes aboard here and expects to get a full share,' says Indry, 'a *man's*

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share, at the end of this trip—and for all the fish he'll bring aboard! And heaves away gear besides; and who'll pay for the lost gear? Will he? No; but it's the crew, not the man who cuts, who pays for lost gear. Yes, we'll do well by *him*!

"Well, if the Lord was to condemn me for my sins, the last punishment I'd want would be to set up before a gang of trawlers, maybe not so good-natured as usual because of a long, hard day in the dories; and perhaps half of 'em who hadn't wanted me aboard in the first place, and they passin' judgment on me after it 'd been proved I was a man that shirked my work, and that ran away from danger; that cut his gear, and put for the vessel when there was no need of it; and his ship-mates, not himself alone, havin' to suffer for it. Don't you say the same, Eddie?"

"Aye, Martin; that's purgatory, sure enough."

"Purgatory? It's hell. And I guess Bushie must 've thought so that night. He sat there on the port lockers, the second man from the peak at the table—just sat there, denyin' nothing once they'd seen the cut line, not even movin' for the cook to clear off the dishes; but just sat there, his head down; never looking up to meet a single eye, and not a blessed word out of him till just before he turned in. You mind him then, Eddie?"

"I do, Martin; and what he said before he

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climbed into the peak to turn in, before he laid himself in his bunk."

"Yes; we'll none of us forget *that*. He stood there where the samson-post is; and standin' there, the light of the samson-lamp was strikin' his face sidewise, and the light of the forem'st lamp on him full—standin' there he faced them all and said, 'Well, next time I'll bet there'll be none of you hang on any longer than I do.' Just that—just like a boy that's ready to burst into tears—and turned his back and disappeared into the darkness of the peak; he had the top peak bunk. And this Addicks roared in pretended amazement after him, and so did Indry; but nobody else said anything. Them two, Indry and Addicks, were big, able men, with no lack of short-comings themselves; but good fishermen both, no denyin' it—good trawlers, the pair of them.

"'He hang on!' sneers Addicks after Bushie 'd gone; 'he will if somebody makes him.'

"'I'll bet if we was to stand up by his bunk now we'd find him cryin',' adds this Indry.

"Well, I have small love myself for people that can't make allowance for people different from themselves, and that made me mad. 'Maybe he is cryin',' I breaks in. 'Good men, better men than either of you, have cried like girls in their time; shut up!' I says.

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"Aye, Martin, and more than that you said." Eddie Foy pounded the locker with his mug to be heard. "'Blast you,' says Martin to him, 'no more of it, or I'll heave the both of you where Addicks hove that tub of trawls to-night.'" Eddie Foy gazed about in pride of his big mate. "And maybe he wouldn't 'a' hove them if they hadn't shut up!"

"Next morning," continued Martin, "when we turned out, it was too rough to put the dories over; but by the middle of the afternoon it moderated, so the skipper thought he'd try it. Some might 'a' said it was poor judgment orderin' the dories over that afternoon; but Lord, if men want to bring home the fish they've got to take chances sometimes. So over we went; and Bushie bein' the first aboard the afternoon before, was, of course, the last out this day, and next to him was Addicks. The pair of 'em were almost together up to wind'ard when the vessel came about to run down the string again.

"Well, after lettin' the trawls set for an hour or so the signal went from the vessel to haul. It was coming on gray and chill then, looking like snow, and pretty cold, with the wind in the east. And so it stayed till nigh dark, when the air cleared and the wind began to back around to the west'ard. It was slow work haulin', owing to the rough bot-



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"I'll bet there'll be none of you hang on any longer than I do."

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tom. Long before I had my first tub in I misdoubted we'd make the vessel before dark. And we didn't. No dory got aboard till well after what should have been sunset; which there wasn't any that evenin'. I was the first on board that evenin', and after pitchin' my fish on deck I went into the rigging with a torch flaring over my head—the skipper keepin' the horn goin' meantime.

“The next two or three men aboard had a report of two dories far down to le'ward drifting away before the tide; and the tide was then settin' before the westerly breeze at a great clip. But as the skipper said, ‘Them two to le'ward can hear the horn, while them to wind'ard can't; and besides, it's eight dories against two!’ And that was good judgment, too.

“It might 've been eight o'clock then, and lookin' bad for all of 'em; but like a hundred other times we see it lookin' bad it didn't turn out so bad. One after the other we picked up them eight wind'ard dories, but the last of 'em not till after eleven o'clock, gettin' them by the sound of their voices while they were still half a mile away because of the strong wind was blowin'. The missing two were Bushie and Addicks, and Addicks we got along about midnight.

“‘See anything of Bushie?’ inquired the skipper, when he's alongside.

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“‘Not since just after dark,’ answers Addicks. ‘When the wind hauled and we were left to le’ward I started for the vessel. He was then haulin’ his trawls and slidin’ off before wind and tide.’

“‘Wonder you wouldn’t give him a lift.’

“‘Me? Give him—that boasted he’d hang out long’s anybody? Besides, I had enough to do to take care of myself.’

“‘I’ll bet,’ says Eddie there to me, but loud enough so Addicks could hear him, ‘that Bushie and him had it out, and Bushie made him quit.’

“And I guess that was so; because Addicks, gen’rally ready enough to explain himself, had no answer to that.

“Well, we expected to see Bushie come aboard afore mornin’, for it was a fine clear night overhead, though also, as you might expect of a westerly at that time of year, cold as hell. Well, a dory’s but a small object on the wide ocean, and in the mornin’ we got no sight of Bushie, nor during all that day—and a cold day it was—and the night that followed. On the second morning neither was he to be seen, and then we worried sure enough, for a winter nor’wester on the Atlantic it’s the coldest wind there is on any ocean.

“We didn’t find Bushie; and a week later, having filled her up, we put for home. Maybe, we said, somebody’s picked her up; but didn’t be-

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lieve it. And two days more saw us in Gloucester, with our flag to half-mast as we sailed past the Point.

“You know how we have to shoot in around the end of the wharf and up into the slip, with that tall smoke-house hidin’ whatever’s layin’ in to the firm’s wharf till you’re in yourself. There in the slip before us was the *Parker*, Billie Simms, and her flag was to half-mast, and every sign was that she’d only just got in, too. ‘Well,’ says we; ‘we’re not the only unfortunates,’ and the skipper hails Billie himself when we shot alongside. And he steps aboard the *Parker* from our rails to hers, as did half a dozen of us, soon as we made fast to him.

“‘Hard luck, Billie,’ says our skipper. ‘Anybody we know?’

“‘Nobody I know,’ says Billie; ‘but I know the dory. And maybe you’ll know it too, when you see it,’ and lifts the canvas from off the bow of the top one of the nest of dories, and there we saw it, the name *Cygnets*.

“‘My dory,’ says our skipper. ‘I was hopin’ he’d be picked up, but’—and looked to Billie’s half-masted flag—‘not like this. You got him, too?’

“‘Yes; we got him.’ For just a second when Billie said that, I had a hope that Bushie was

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alive, but only for a second. 'Billie rolls the canvas back further, and there we all saw him, the poor frozen body, the oilskins covered with ice; but the face warn't ice-covered, nor marked in any way. Calm and smooth and natural as life, poor Bushie's frozen face was starin' up the sky.

"The skipper looked down on him. We all looked down on him, and Billie Simms, touchin' the breast of the oil-jacket, said: 'No wonder. Under these he hadn't clothes enough to warm a cat.' And one of us there touched the poor forehead, and then another, and 'Poor Bushie!' says two or three.

"Our skipper leaned, weak as water, over the dory-gunnel, and from there he didn't move till Billie Simms replaced the canvas over the body. 'Hard lines,' says Billie. 'And I s'pose 'twill be you will have to tell his folks?'

"Our skipper comes to himself then. 'No, not me, Billie; I'll be damned if I do,' and wheeling and pointing his woolen mitt at Addicks and Indry. 'One of you, damn you, go up and tell them.'

"As for myself, that liked the boy so well, I couldn't do anything. I s'pose I ought to 've crushed the pair of 'em, but I couldn't have crushed a fly, I felt that bad; but Eddie there——"

"Aye me," agreed Eddie, "I goes up to Addicks



"Our skipper leaned, weak as water, over the dory-gunnel."

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and repeats the skipper's words. 'Yes, you,' I repeats; and then, with no more notion of doing it before I did do it than I have of jumping on Martin now, 'You hound!' I says, and leaps at him and smashes him to the deck. Yes, big Addicks, that was big enough to eat me, and when he stands up I smashes him again. And then I turns and smashes Indry. 'You hounds o' hell!' I shrieks; 'go up and tell them!'"

"And nobody," continued Martin, "seemed very much surprised at Eddie either; and without a word, without even stoppin' to wipe the blood from their faces—and their faces, not havin' been shaved for two weeks, the blood was crawling in and out of their beards—they swung themselves into the *Parker's* riggin', and from there to the stringpiece, and hurries up the wharf on their errand. They didn't even stop long enough to get a drink in a saloon on the way up, but kept on toward Main Street, and never a look behind to see if we were watchin' them or no.

"Yes, sir, they went on up. And never came back—not to the *Cygnnet*, anyway. And next day we took their bags, slip-shods, bedding and diddy-boxes, and everything else in their bunks, and hove 'em into the harbor. One of 'em, Addicks, didn't need the gear, anyway; he never went fishing again."

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Here, while Martin paused to stare into the bottom of his empty mug, the cook queried, "And what's become of Addicks, Martin?"

"Oh, he's ashore, working a day now and a day again, when he c'n find anybody to give him a day's work and he's sober enough, for from that day to this he's drawn but few sober breaths."

"And Indry, Martin?"

"About a month later he was washed off the deck of the *Independence* off Bacalien—she making a passage at the time. 'Twas in broad light, too; but nobody jumped overboard after *him*."

During the silence which ensued, Martin stood up and looked toward the coffee kettle, as if contemplating another mug-up; but moderation, as ever, prevailing with him, he eventually, though with a lingering shake of the head, replaced his mug in the grub-locker.

"February the twelfth, a year to-morrow—poor Bushie!" muttered Martin, and mounted the ladder.

"Poor Bushie!" echoed Foy, and climbed after Martin.

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“CLANCY was laying his course that day,
Clipping it out o’ Fortune Bay—”

and so on to the further details, the fifteen hundred barrels of frozen herring in his hold, and a breeze that sang lullabies of home, when one of his crew had to fall sick.

“And of all times!” exploded his mates. “The first cargo of the season; and now Glover ’ll beat us out—ready to sail when we left.” But there was nothing for it but to put back to St. Marys and ship another man in his place.

The new man was but fairly over the rail—Man! but the jaunty chap he was!—when he had to break out with: “So this is the Tommie Clancy I’ve been hearing so much about? The great Tommie Clancy—Clancy the sail carrier! Well, I’ve yet to see the man that could carry sail enough for me.”

Of course that was too good for the crew to keep; and while they were getting under way again they started to tell the skipper of what the new man had said, thinking to touch his professional reply and sting him to one of his famous

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rejoinders, perhaps set him to teach the fellow a lesson. But they were grievously disappointed. He did not let them half finish. "To the devil with what he said!" exploded the irate Clancy. He had only himself just leaped aboard, after seeing the sick man attended to ashore. "Look now!" and held up a letter. "Ought to have been given me a week ago. Only I stepped into the post-office on the way down, I'd never got it at all. If I'd got it when I ought to, we'd been half-way home by now, with that sick man taking his chances out of the medicine-chest. And more than that," and he held aloft a telegram, although, instead of telling them what that was about, he thrust it into an inside pocket.

"Hush!" warned one, a subtle one, a man who had essayed to report the new man's words about sail-carrying. "Maybe he's put out about Glover, who left for home last night," meaning it to reach the skipper's ears, which it did.

"To the devil with Glover!" said Clancy. "We won't be home any later because he's left before us."

"But the market, Skipper?"

"To hell with the market, too—what's the matter with that anchor? Is that anchor cat-headed yet? No? Well, why isn't it? And another heave or two on those throat-halyards. And, Lord

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in heaven! bend your backs. Some o' you act as though you thought you were pulling on pack-threads."

And in that spirit they left for home. At dark they had sunk the headlands of Cannargie, at dawn they raised the cliffs of Whitehead, which truly was going some, as Sam Leary put it when after an arduous trick to the wheel he dropped below, dodging as he leaped from the lowest step the heavy steel stays which held the *Duncan* together forward. Them damn things—"some day they'll cut a man's head off coming below in a hurry."

"I cal'late by the way she's hoppin', Sammie, that it's blowin' some." This from the cook.

"Go up and have a look for yourself, cookie. *Some* water on her deck."

"No need to go on deck to see loose water, Sam. I c'n get that here. I wish she was a little tighter. There's blessed little comfort wearin' rubber boots all the time below. Don't you think she's a bit loose for a winter passage, Sammie? Look at them things, now." He pointed to the heavy strengthening stays which Sam had dodged, and which stretched across the forec's'le just abaft the butt of the foremast.

These rods, to which Sam had already referred, and of an X form, extended from side to side of the vessel. If it were not for them the *Duncan*,

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a notoriously hard-driven vessel would (or so common report had it) have long ago ended her career. To further stiffen the *Duncan*, it may be added, that she was also hooped by iron bands outside her hull; the same extending from chain-plates to chain-plates forward. Even as the men gazed, the steel stays, which crossed at the foremast, were quivering under the impact which came of the vessel plunging into heavy seas before an immense press of canvas. "Some day, Sammie, them rods'll part, and then she'll split in two like a Boston cracker and down she'll go the further from the cook."

"If, instead of swearing at them so much, cook, you'd once in a while take a marlinespike to the turnbuckle and screw 'em a little tighter—" Sam followed his own advice. "There; that looks better."

"But she *is* loose, Sammie."

"Loose? Of course she's loose. But that's no fault of hers. Look back at the passages she's made. Sure 'tisn't in nature for a vessel to be driven as this man's driven this one for years now and she not be loose. But that only affects a vessel's comfort. For sailin' 'tis no harm. Indeed, 'tis notorious that a loose vessel sails fastest."

"H-m-m—then this one ought to be about the fastest thing that ever wiped her nose in a winter westerly."

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“And so she is. I’d hate to say what I think she’s logging now, for fear of what you’d call me. But what odds if she is loose, so she’s standin’ up well? And she’s standin’ up—well enough to carry her mains’l anyway, and all the vessels that’s carryin’ a whole mains’l hereaway to-day c’n be counted on the thumbs of a one-armed man, I’ll bet.”

“And no slack now. Sammie, till he’s home, I s’pose?”

“Slack? Slack?” Leary looked into the cook’s face to assure himself no joke was meant. “This man slack on a passage home? Well, if—there goes another bunch of crockery, cookie. You ought to know better than leave them around so careless—and the way this vessel’s bein’ jolted. If I know him, he’s got a picture in his eye now of cradles and babies and a lone woman by the fire. No, sir, if it was blowin’ 16-inch guns out of the water he wouldn’t slack now.”

And never a slack did Clancy think of. Cruel it certainly seemed. Wind just forward of her beam then, and so allowing of sheet enough to keep all the bouncing life in her. And the sea? She was picking it up over her knightheads and passing it along deck, smothering hatches, house, and wheel-box, and over the taffrail roaring. “Like an express-train on the other track,” said

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the next man off watch after Leary. "Honest, I caught myself looking back at her wake to see if I couldn't see the cars going out of sight around the curve. Man! if she don't bust all the records this trip!"

And that started them to figuring out how long before she would be here, there, and finally into Gloucester, which is known of any old Gloucester fisherman to be the surest way to discount any good luck in store. It was only inevitable, then, that the vengeful wind should jump to the westward. The skipper was the first to note the veering, and it was, "Blast your hoary old face!—can't you stay with a man in a hurry for two days running?" And to the man at the wheel then, "Let her come about, and don't trip her, either."

Almost to Sable Island Northwest Light it was on that tack. Abreast of Cape Sable they hoped it would be on the inshore tack. But no; the wind headed them off again and developed into a westerly hurricane, of which, between one tack and the other, they got thirty hours, she reeling off her express speed under four lowers the meantime. It was then her planks first gave warning. Clancy was not deaf to the indications. "But no fear; she won't give in. I never could make her give in. She'll keep going, this one, till the planks are torn from her frame. That's the spirit

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of her. But here's this devil's breeze heading us off again."

It was on that next tack she showed herself the wonderful vessel altogether. And Clancy standing right there to see her. "Did you ever see her like?" he asked, and so fired with admiration of her that—she was carrying her four lowers then—he thought to try her with the staysail. And did. And she stood up under that; not without some further creaking and groaning of her joints, it is true, but still right side up. "M-m!" murmured Clancy, in sheer admiration, and after that gave her the balloon. Blue times it was then, spume and foam and a clawing sea—a great occasion altogether. Grand, yes—life well worth living; and then—it was the forward watch who, thinking he heard an unusual gurgling overboard, stuck his head over her windward bow. And immediately hopped back with warning arms: "Skipper! oh, Skipper, she's all opened up for'ard!"

"Then slap it to her on the other tack," said Clancy, and never even smiled, for the madness of making a passage was on him.

And while on that other tack came a glorious southeasterly, and riotous joy prevailed aboard the *Duncan*. A southeasterly gale for home-bound vessels, especially in winter! It is a softening, albeit at times a howling, influence. Par-

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ticularly does it add to the joy of man when it follows a hard westerly, serving then to melt the ice. And straight down the Cape Shore went the *Duncan* before it, while Tommie Clancy, standing on her quarter, smiled the smile of a boy with a slice of bread and molasses. To Sam Leary's query, "Will you beat him out?" he asked, "Beat who out?"

"Why, Glover."

"Oh, him! Twelve hours start? I don't know. And what's more, Sammie, I don't know's I care. We're sailing now, that's sure," and the frequent seas threatening to overhaul and smother her; he took the wheel himself; and for fourteen hours stood to it, lifting a hand from the spokes only to gulp down the cups of hot coffee which were brought when chance offered. And sang little songs to himself the while—songs of home, and hearth, and wife, and children—songs the Celtic people sing as the mother rocks the babies, the fathers as they meditate on life, death, and what comes after.

In the milder spells of that run the water on her quarter piled to Clancy's thighs, but later it came to his waist; and there was one inspiring stretch of four hours when the solid water came boiling to his breast. And a man of sweeping height was Clancy. She must have been a sight

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to please the gods; certainly she was a joy to all she met along the way. They breasted a fleet of outbound trawlers hove to inside La Have, under double-reefed foresails all. To the rail of one, the *Buccaneer*, stood Crump Taylor. "What is it?" hailed Crump.

"I don't know," yelled back Tommie, "but I'll know before a great while an' this breeze holds out."

"Well, what's your hurry?" asked the master of the next one, which herself rocked to the sea's surge till her fore-keel could be seen to the waist.

"Oh, no great hurry—just going to the westward," retorted Clancy.

"Excuse *me!*" said that one.

"Drive her!" yelled the next. On the *Duncan* they couldn't hear the words, so rapidly was she sweeping by; but they knew what he meant by the swishing sweep of his oilclothed arm.

Not until they rounded Cape Sable and were getting the wind fair abeam did Clancy give over the wheel. After three days and nights on his feet he was beginning to feel the need of rest. It was three o'clock in the morning then. "Keep her as she is—nothing to. If anything, keep her off. If I don't wake before, call me at seven," and turned in on the lockers.

But they didn't have to call him, for in his sleep

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he felt the unusual motion. He rolled to his side and waited. A moment and she came up almost standing; another moment and she was tearing away. A minute or two and she was brought up again; another and she was off. Clancy stood up. The clock indicated a few minutes after six. Two or three of the crew, expecting the call to coffee—there had been no table since the beginning of the westerly—were already sitting around on the lockers. Again she fetched up, and again she was off again. "How's it above?" asked Clancy.

"'Bout the same; maybe a breath more wind, if anything."

"Has it been going on for long, that luffing?"

"Since this man's had the wheel."

The unusual readiness to fix the blame arrested Clancy's attention. Forgetfully he lowered his head to look up the companionway to see who it was; but the boards which two days before had been set up to keep the deck water from the cabin were still there, and the man to the wheel could not be seen?"

"And who is it?"

They were more than willing to tell him. "It's the sail-carrier you shipped in Fortune Bay."

"Oh-h——"

"And now that he's to the wheel, his eyes are white with fear of the world to come."

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Clancy said nothing, but presently went on deck; and there stood by the wheel and casually observed the progress of things. No getting around it, 'twas a wild-looking morning for a vessel to be carrying all the sail she had in her locker.

With the master at his side the new man kept his nerve for perhaps five minutes, by which time he could stand it no more. In the face of a mountainous sea that looked as if it was surely going to engulf them, he hurriedly put down the wheel. Even while the wave was sweeping her decks, ere yet it had passed on, with its grand backwash receding musically down her sloping deck, Clancy was warning his helmsman.

"Don't do that. Keep her to the course—nothing to. If anything, keep her off. A good full always to keep the life in her. That kind of work discourages a vessel; she's going home, mind."

"Yes, sir," and on her course again was the *Duncan* put. And for perhaps another five minutes the new man held her to it; but the prospect proving too much for him, again he luffed her.

Clancy laid a gentle arm on the wheelsman's shoulder and spoke softly. "I told you not to do that, and you mustn't. Don't do it again. This one's a little loose maybe, but she'll take all you

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can give her. I know her better than you, mind, and I'm telling you to trust her. And even if she wasn't reliable, which she is, mind—this is no time for jogging. We're going home, going home, boy, and a good full's what she wants."

After that Clancy thought the man was cured. But no. Five minutes perhaps and again she was luffed.

Clancy laid a hand on the wheel. "You needn't bother about steering any more. I'll stand your watch out, and do you go below. And if you'll take my advice, and no offence meant, when you get to Gloucester you'll take to farming; for cert'nly the Lord never intended you for a fisherman."

Be sure they heard that below—an ear to the binnacle-box assured it; and when he came below among them furtive glances stole around the company. But, like gentlemen, they said never a word. Nor did he then; only sat down on a locker and drew off his oilskins, first his jacket and trousers, then followed his jack-boots, wearily, and got into his slipshods; after which he reached back and from under the mattress of his bunk drew out a plug of tobacco and rolled it in the palm of his hands, and filled his pipe, and stretched his feet then toward the stove.

In which position he smoked meditatively, and,

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after a while—puff—puff—and a great sigh: “Well, I’ve crossed the Bay of Fundy a hundred times, but this is the first time ever I crossed under water.”

The disrated helmsman’s mate was at that time forward, considering how foolish it was to attempt to stand watch at all. He was making no pretension to look out; simply curled up and waited for his hour to come to an end. “And I might’s well been below for all the good I was doing,” he explained when he did get below. “Might as well lock her up forward and let her go her way, for it’s nothing but a solid ledge of clear white water ahead of her, and into that she’s everlastin’ly pilin’.”

“And how’s the skipper? Looking tired yet?”

“Him tired? And the vessel goin’ to the west’ard? Man! he’s just beginnin’ to beam!”

“Still singin’ the little songs to himself, rhymin’ as he goes along?”

“Ay, still singin’,

“West half no’the and drive her, we’re abreast now of
Cape Sable,

’Tis an everlastin’ hurricane, but here’s the craft that’s
able—

singin’ away, and his eyes shinin’ like Thacher’s
after you’ve come a passage from Flemish Cap.”

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The prospect by and by moved Sam Leary to ascend to the deck, where his eyes at once caught a faint column of smoke. "That the Yarmouth steamer, Skipper, down to le'ward?"

"That's the old lady, Sam. Raised her at seven o'clock this morning, and by twelve o'clock—the way we're sliding along now—we'll have rubbed even that blotch of smoke off the skyline, Sam."

"And they say she averages her fourteen knots one year's end to the other? Well, that's tearin' 'em off some." He took a fresh grip of the weather-rigging and gazed with yet more respectful interest at her deck. "Lord! Lord! loose as cinders and fair leapin' for home. And—hullo, what! Thacher's already? Lord! Skipper, but she's cert'nly been pushin' the suds out of her way. I'll bet you were glad to see 'em." He nodded to the twin shafts ahead.

"I could kiss the whitewashed stones of 'em, Sammie. And here"—Clancy slipped the lifeline from about his body—"here, Sam, and mind you keep her going."

They kept her going, with never a slack till she was safe to the dock; and up the dock, ere yet her lines were fast or her lowering sails down, Clancy flew.

A dozen would have stopped him. By their

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smiles he knew that he had brought home the first load of frozen herring of the season; but small glory in that for him now. All along the coast, when around his lashed body the green seas curled 'twas not of herring, or bonus, or anything with the mark of money on it, that was holding thrall his fancy. The *Duncan* herself could hardly have taken longer leaps before the gale than did Clancy up the dock.

An empty buggy, with a sleepy-looking horse between the shafts, was standing before the door of an office at the head of the wharf. A boy was huddled on some steps near by. "Whose gear?" asked Clancy, who by then was on the seat and reaching for the whip.

"Belongs to a runner selling fish-hooks inside."

"Well, tell him I took it when he comes out. Chk-chk—get up, you fat loafer!"

"Oh, Captain—oh, Captain!" the owner called from the doorway of an office, but he called too late. Up the street a plump, astonished horse was flying with a rattling buggy, and a cloud of dust in his wake. Through the streets of Gloucester went Clancy; jibed a corner, then away for fair sailing on a straight stretch; another corner, a beat up an incline, one more corner and another fine straight stretch, and then fetched up all standing, with

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the sides of the poor beast shaking like a mainsail in the wind.

Fifty yards away was Clancy's home. But he did not go clattering to that; the courage of him was now failing. He slacked down, halted even, and, leaning a hand against the tree before the door, drew a full breath or two. So much could happen in a week! At the door he tried to fit the key to the lock, but it would not turn. The cold sweat came over him. What did it mean? He tried again. Still no turn. He tried the knob then—and the door opened. It hadn't been locked at all. And then he remembered: "There'll be no lock on the door, Tommie, once I hear you are on the way home. Night or day you won't have to stop to open the lock."

Perhaps all was well, after all. He stepped into the hall. Hearing a noise in the kitchen, he headed that way. Maybe—but no; it was the old helper. Before he could reach her he heard her, talking to herself, as was her habit.

"Tea and toast," she was saying. "Mustn't cut the slices too thick for toast—tea and toast for the poor creature!"

"And who's the poor creature? How is she?"

The old woman started and turned at the sound of that hoarse voice. "Oh, Captain Clancy!"

"And how is she?"

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"Oh, but the lovely baby boy—the day after we sent the telegram."

Clancy gripped the door-frame and came nigher to the old woman. "But Ann?"

"Man alive, have no fear! Would I be standing with a quiet mind here and the poor girl not well? She's sitting up to-day."

He started to say something, but his tongue would not act. "Upstairs? in her room?" he managed to whisper at length.

The old woman smiled and nodded.

"I must go up—but wait. I mustn't make any noise, must I? Don't tell her—don't call. I want myself to bring the first word. She'll like it better."

"Yes, and more than the word she'll like the man that brings it. And go soon, Captain, for there's that in your eyes would win queens from their thrones."

Clancy removed his boots, the same great boots that till now had not been drawn from his feet since he had left Newfoundland. Upstairs he crept. A sound, well-built house it was, and the stairs did not creak under his weight. As he went up he heard her voice crooning softly. Changed it was, with new tones in it, but still her own voice always—no other voice like it. She was singing now; and on the landing, with the half-open door

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of her room no more than an arm's length away he stopped and listened. And, listening, waited, wondering curiously just why he waited. Night and day he had been driving—snow, ice, hail, gales of wind, and great seas—and during it all but one thought, to be where he was now. A hundred times he had pictured himself bounding up the stairs and into her arms. Yet now that he was here, he was waiting; now that he was so near, he lacked the courage to go in. And even while he hesitated the dear voice broke into a new song:

“Home to his sweetheart your father is sweeping,
Home through the gale his brave vessel is leaping,—
Home through the foam of the turbulent ocean,
Over the shoals, over the knolls, over the wild western
ocean to thee!”

The wave of flame that swept over him! How well she knew!

“Over the shoals, over the knolls, over the wild western
ocean to thee!”

He waited no longer; and as through the door he had heard, so now in the doorway she saw him. And her face!— He clasped her, mother and baby, he clasped them both, and pride as well as love rang in his voice. “Ann, Ann, but where’s the man wouldn’t carry sail for you!”

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"Tommie—Tommie—home again!" and laid the baby in his arms and cried on his breast.

Harry Glover got home that night. His crew lost no time in getting ashore. It had been a notable passage, and they were wistful to ease the strain and to boast of some pretty fair work against a hard westerly along the way. And did boast, until they heard that Clancy was in before them. "Well, I'm damned!" it was with them then—with all of them, that is, but Steve Clifford.

Clifford met Sam Leary along the way. "I half expected it, Sam, as the rest of the crew 'll tell you. We were passing the fleet anchored on La Have. They hailed out something we couldn't quite get. But the skipper thought it was something in praise of the sail he was carrying. He had her under four lowers then and was some proud. He called to me, knowing I'd been with Clancy a few trips. 'Where's your *Johnnie Duncan*?' he says—'where's Tommie Clancy and your *Johnnie Duncan* at this writing, do you s'pose?'

"'Where?' says I. 'Well, if I know Tommie Clancy and the *Johnnie Duncan*, she's playin' leap-frog across the Bay o' Fundy by this time—ho! ho! so help me, Sam—playin' leap-frog across the Bay o' Fundy—yes. And he liked to kill me then—yes.'"

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Later still Clancy met Glover—Glover the Diplomat, but with curious streaks of good nature in him. Clancy, with a package under one arm, was running like a little boy whose mother has sent him on an errand and told him to make haste. He had been to the drug-store, he explained, for a bottle of peptonized something or other—he was not just sure what it was—he only knew that he had to hurry back.

“Tommie,” said Glover, “what d’ y’ say to a little touch?”

“No time, Harry, now.”

“Oh, make time. You ought to after that passage. No? Not even one for the baby?”

“Who told you about him?”

“Oh, forty people. And I hear he’s a wonder, too.”

“Well, I don’t know but what I will have a little touch—just one. And “Harry, as God is my judge”—Clancy in a rapture held his free arm aloft—“he grips my mustache only just now, and d’ y’ think I could make him let go? Not him. Man! but what a grip he’ll have for a wheel, if ever he lives to grow up and has to go fishing!”

“Let’s hope he’ll never have to go fishing.”

“There you said it, Harry.” Clancy laid the free arm on Glover’s. “No, let’s hope he won’t. It ’ll do for us, but not for our children. But if

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he does"—he held the glass to the light—"and if ever he takes his mains'l in to any——"

"If he does, he'll be no boy of yours, Tommie. And so he'll never take it in to any that's afloat. And now, Tommie, before we drink the boy's health—that bet I made with you just before we left on the passage——"

"That, Harry? And we drinking to the boy? Why, it's the next thing to a christening! No; put your money back."

"But what 'll I do with it?"

"Lord! I don't care what you do with it. Heave it overboard, or buy bait with it, or give it to the foreign missions. I know I don't want it, nor won't take it. Here's to the boy—and the mother—God bless her!—that bore him."



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